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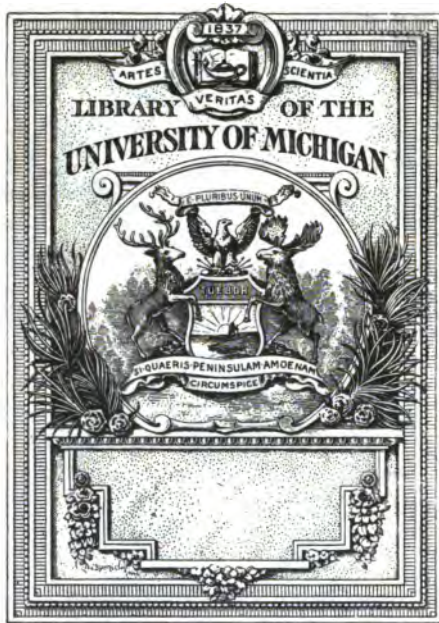
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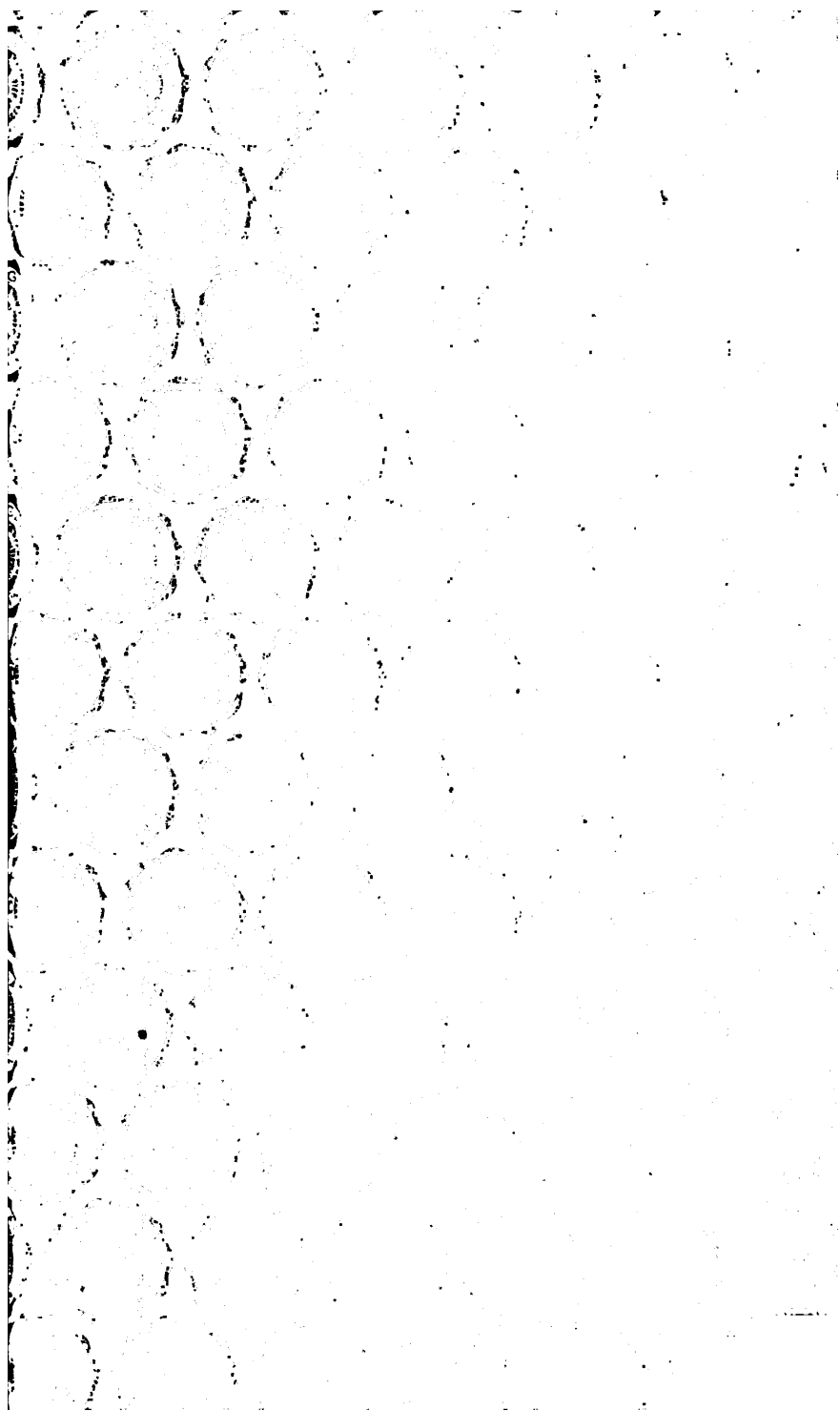
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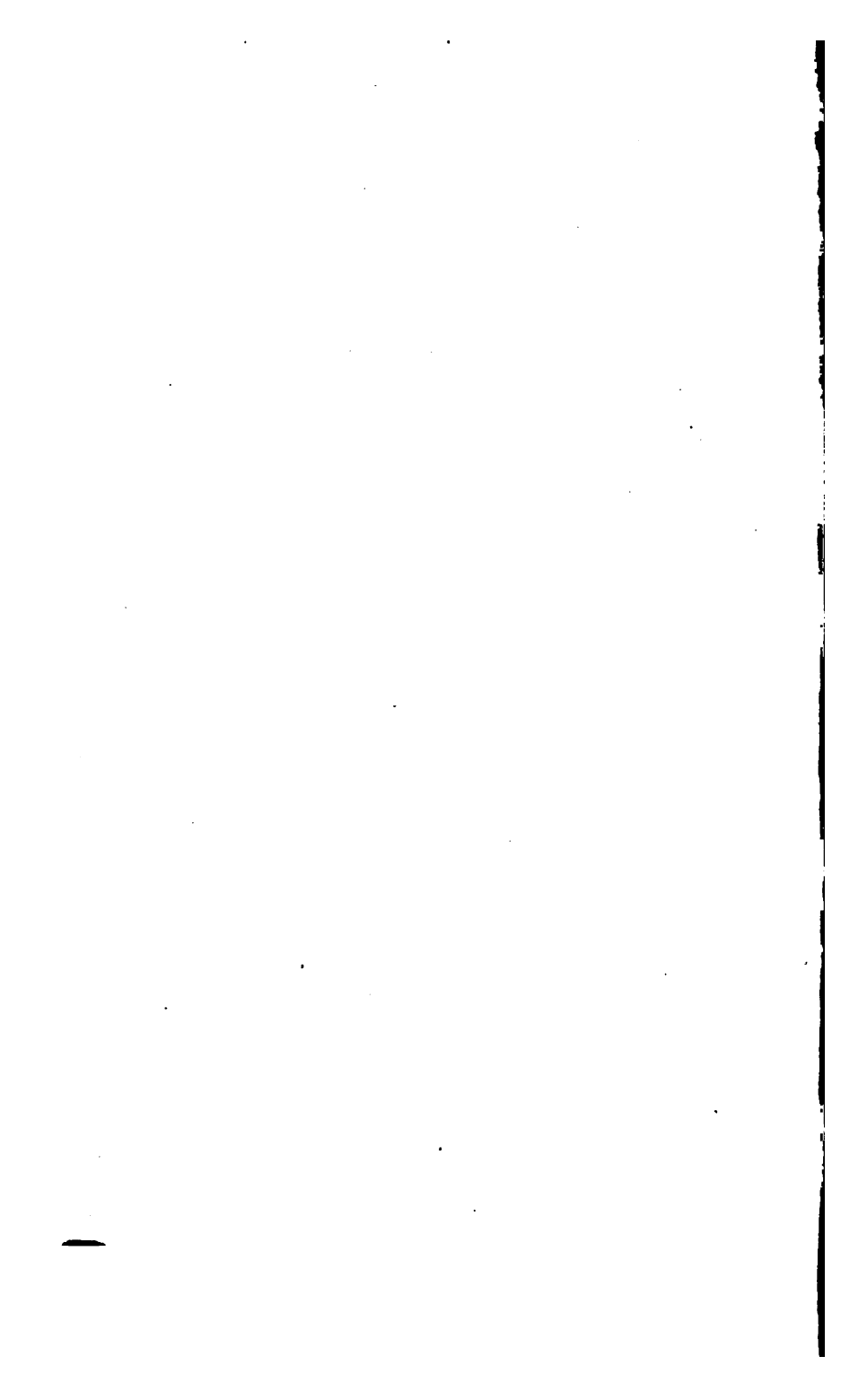


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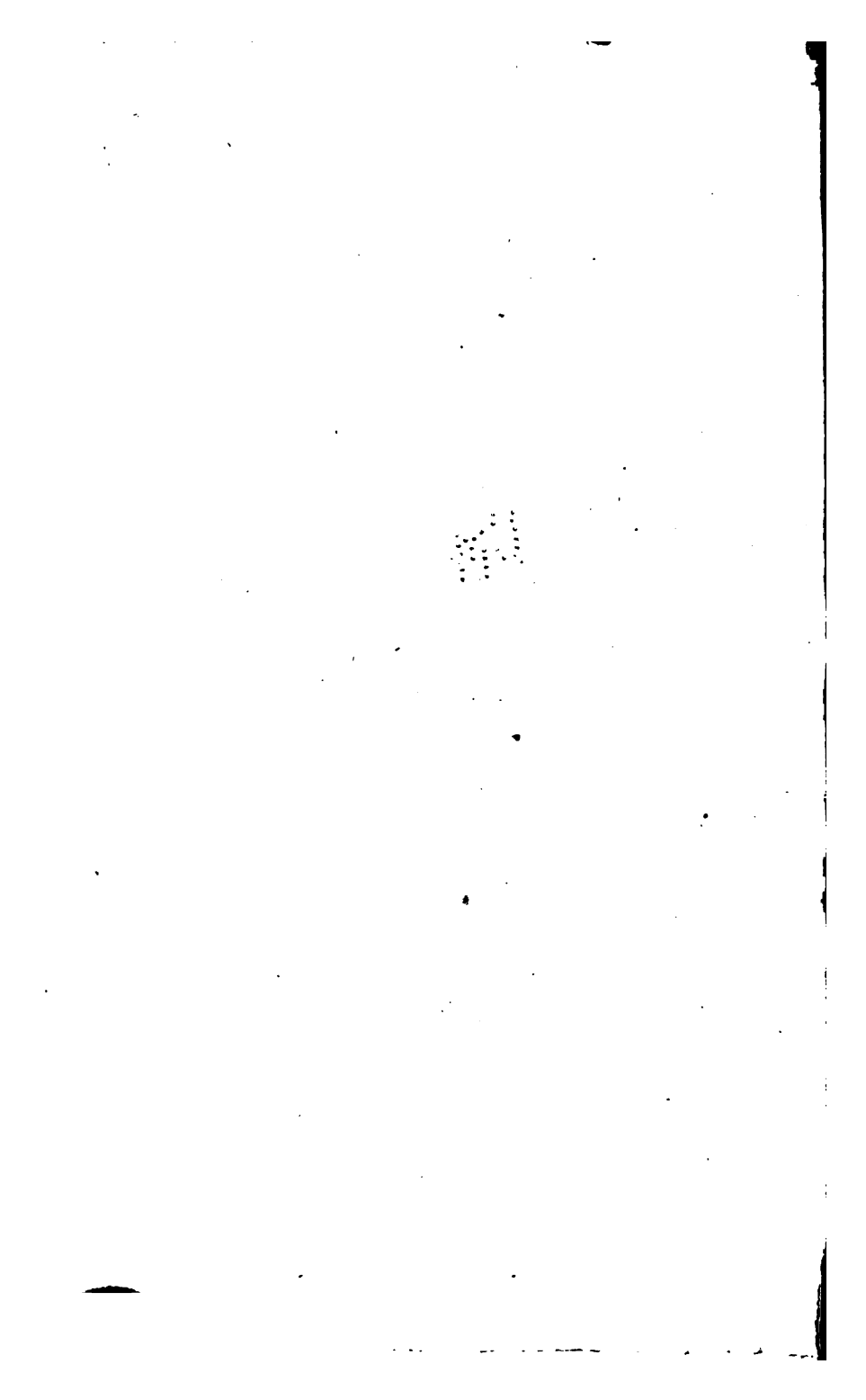
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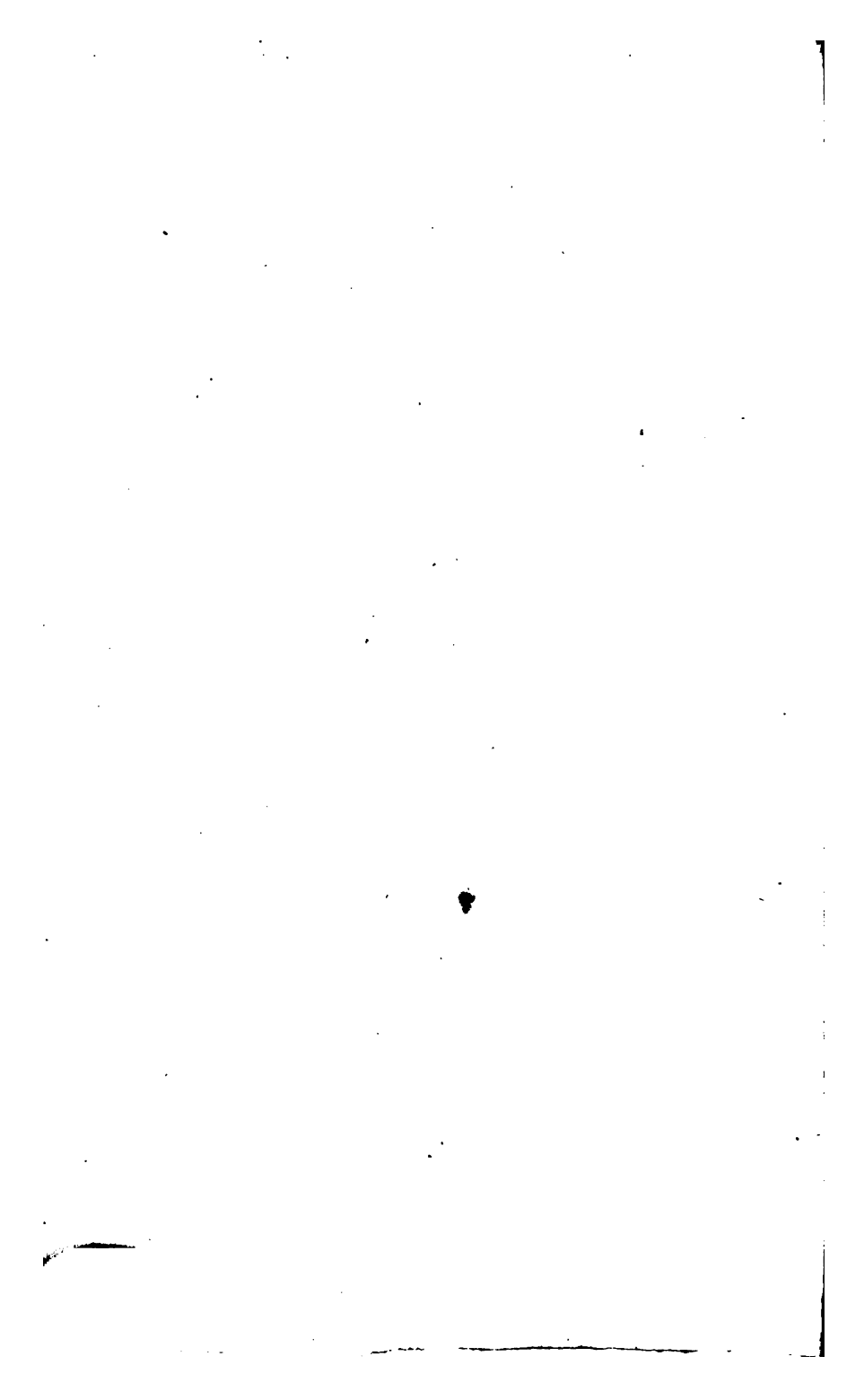
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I MUST remind the readers of these lectures that they are lectures on a period of history, and not a substantive historical work. Were they the latter, I should have conceived it my duty to support the statements made in them by references, not merely to the original authorities on which they are based, but also to the modern writers to whom I am indebted for any of the views embodied in them. Such as they are, I have thought they might dispense with this addition. For convenience sake I have placed a short chronological table before each lecture.

LONDON,
March 26th, 1855.

Paed Feb 27 '28 BF



CONTENTS.

LECTURE I.

B.C. 31—A.D. 180. A.U.C. 723—933.

FROM AUGUSTUS TO M. AURELIUS I

LECTURE II.

A.D. 180—324 A.U.C. 933—1077.

FROM COMMODUS TO CONSTANTINE 53

LECTURE III.

A.D. 324—395. A.U.C. 1077—1148.

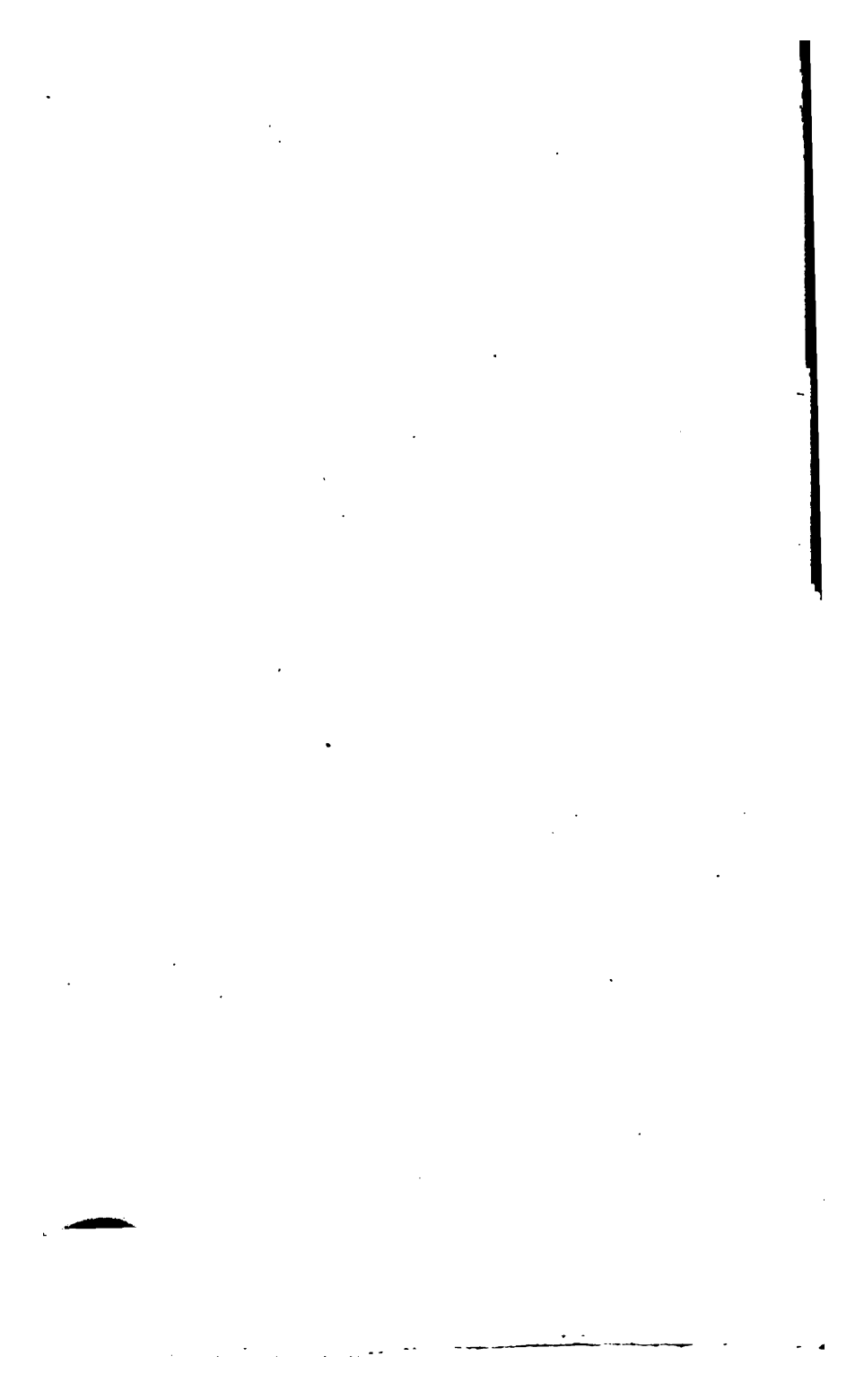
FROM CONSTANTINE TO THEODOSIUS I. 95

LECTURE IV.

A.D. 395—476. A.U.C. 1148—1229.

FROM THE DIVISION OF THE EMPIRE TO THE END
OF THE EMPIRE OF THE WEST 131

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LECTURE I.

FROM AUGUSTUS TO M. AURELIUS
ANTONINUS.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

B.C. 31 ...	A.U.C. 723 ...			Actium: Accession of Augustus.
A.D. 14 ...	"	767 ...		Tiberius.
"	"	790 ...		Caligula.
"	"	794 ...		Claudius.
"	"	807 ...		Nero.
"	"	821 ...		Galba.
"	"	822 ...		Otho.
"	"	822 ...		Vitellius.
"	"	822 ...		Vespasian.
"	"	832 ...		Titus.
"	"	834 ...		Domitian.
"	"	849 ...		Nerva.
"	"	851 ...		Trajan.
"	"	870 ...		Hadrian.
"	"	891 ...		Antoninus Pius.
"	"	914 ...		M. Aurelius.

LECTURE I.

FROM AUGUSTUS TO M. AURELIUS ANTONINUS.

Introduction—The position of the subject—Early life of Augustus—State of the frontiers of the empire at his accession, after Actium—His foreign policy—The extent of the empire, and the variety of its component parts—The object of the imperial system—The administration of Augustus, and its principles—The office of Pontifex Maximus, and the Tribunitian power—Tiberius and his three successors—Vespasian—Trajan—His change of policy and conquests—Hadrian—His administration—Antoninus Pius—M. Aurelius—Conclusion.

I HAVE to treat of the History of Rome from the settlement of its monarchy under Augustus to the extinction of the Empire of the West under Augustulus—a period of 507 years ; from the battle of Actium, thirty-one years before the Christian era, down to the year 476 of that era. But in dealing with this period, there are two great subjects excluded : the one is the literature of Rome, the second is the history of Christianity. It is the political and social aspect of the period named to which these lectures direct your attention ; of the other two, the first may be excluded—the second cannot be so ; both, however, may be excluded from any direct treatment, and whatever reference is made to them may be made from the point of

view chosen—they may be looked on, that is, as social and political, not as literary or religious, phenomena.

A comparison of the length of the period to be reviewed, with the space allotted me for its review, will at once lead my hearers to see that any detailed history is out of the question: still less will they expect any disquisition on obscure and controverted points. These 500 years occupy in Gibbon three octavo volumes out of six, and even then the first 200 years are treated in the most summary manner in the three masterly chapters which open his great work: and yet Gibbon is not thought to have written at too great length. My task, as I conceive it, is, whilst I lay before you as clear an outline of the history as I can, to present you with the leading features of the Imperial system in its rise, maturity, decline, and fall; to submit the principles on which it should be judged, if you wish to form a correct appreciation of it; above all, to mark the place held by the Roman Empire in the great series of events that constitutes the history of the world. Such, in fact, is, as a rule, the task of the lecturer on history. Its details must be mastered by the student in retirement. The grouping of these details, the connexion of isolated facts, the principles which are to guide him in their study—such is the help he looks for from the lecturer. If, over and above this, there is at present another object to

be aimed at—that of exciting an interest in historical subjects—this is but a temporary addition, at least in its degree, and depends on the generally low state of historical science.

If we wish an instance of this, our subject affords one ready to our hands in the prevailing judgment as to its comparative interest and position. I say prevailing, for there are many exceptions, and there are indications of a change in this respect. Still, at present, most would, I think, take this view—that the main interest of Roman history is connected with its earlier period. It is especially republican Rome, with its internal struggles and foreign wars, to which they would turn. This has arisen partly from accident, partly from causes connected with our own political state. A free, and growing, and agitated people, long familiar with the contests of political parties, becoming familiar slowly with the interests and dangers that attend strongly marked social divisions, naturally concentrates its attentions on a period of kindred phenomena. The struggle between the patricians and plebeians in the earlier, the contest of rich and poor in the later times of republican Rome, have led men away from the consideration of the empire; and when the civil wars are closed at Actium, and Augustus inaugurates the new era, then precisely to the majority does Roman history seem to close, the life of Rome to be extinct, the period of Rome's decline to begin.

Yet that this is an erroneous view the thoughtful student of history will readily admit. I have no wish to underrate the importance or the interest of Roman history prior to the Empire. In fact, the view I take of history, as forming one unbroken series, never to be divided except simply for purposes of convenient handling—distinguishable, that is, into some few great periods—would lead me to assign to each of these periods its own peculiar interest, and not to depreciate one at the expense of others. I would, therefore, say to the student of Roman history—study, not less accurately than you have done, the period before the Empire. Trace the growth of Rome with a gradually increasing attention, as your materials improve in historical value. Pass lightly, therefore, over its mythical and kingly period, as also over that of its earliest existence as a free state, but watch its first efforts towards conquest, each step of its progress to the conquest of Italy. Then master, as minutely as you like, its long struggle with Carthage, Macedon, and the East. Lose none of the points of interest that are presented by the contest between its factions and their leaders—Sulla, and Marius, and Marius' great successor, Julius Cæsar. Study in the faint outline—unfortunately but too faint—which has reached us, each action, each design, each recorded word of that master of Roman policy, the convulsions that followed his murder, and the process by

which his successor attained empire. But in doing all this, never forget that, whether you date the Roman Empire from the final victory of Julius Cæsar, or from the comparatively imperfect realization of his ideas effected by Augustus, in either case it is the Empire which is the real object of your interest throughout; it is as preparatory to its organization that the anterior history must be read; that the Empire is the manhood of which we have been tracing the infancy and youth; that in the Empire we find the result which atones for the means—the peaceful settlement which justifies the long antecedent period of suffering, of war, of conquest.

The Empire, as distinct from the Republic—the substitution of the government of one, resting on the support of the army, for the government of the few or of the many, according as the oligarchy or democracy triumphed, the substitution, in other words, of an imperial despotism for the play and conflict of parties characteristic of a free state—finds its justification in the proved incapacity of those parties, or rather factions, to combine for any harmonious action. From the time when the Roman Optimates succeeded by violence in crushing the Gracchi, there was no other solution of the political difficulties possible but the compression of all party strife under the vigorous rule of one man. So only could a stop be put to the alterna-

tions of oligarchical and democratical reaction, with their attendant horrors. This results from a careful consideration of the two contending parties, and of the absence of any third or middle party, strong enough to enforce moderation upon each extreme. It would have been well for Rome, viewed apart from its subjects, had its statesmen been aware of this, and capable of acquiescing in this conclusion, at the time when Julius Cæsar had triumphed over all opposition, and, as dictator for life, was bent on organizing as a monarchy the Empire which he had conquered. Their ignorance of this fact led to the long subsequent struggle, but did not change the ultimate result. Looked at strictly from the Roman point of view, the Empire was then, I conceive, a gain; and the common language which contrasts despotism and liberty, even in the mouth of Tacitus, should not be allowed to mislead us. All political questions must be judged by a relative standard, and relatively to the wants and the actual state of Rome there was an imperious demand for a monarchical settlement.

The Roman Empire, again, as an organic whole, distinct from the system of independent nationalities which it superseded by incorporating them, finds its justification equally in the proved incapacity of those independent nationalities, whether within their own separate sphere, or in their mutual relations to one another, to combine for any har-

monious action. War, it must be recollected, was the normal state of the ancient world; it was, that is, the state that was conceived to exist between nations, unless there were special stipulations to the contrary. In the absence, then, of any dominant and controlling power, strife and bloodshed exhausted the energies of the human race, interfering with all higher objects, and rendering it impossible to look on any of the results of civilization already gained as secure. For it was not merely that the separate units of the civilized world, in its then extent, tore and wasted each other's strength in endless and fruitless conflicts, but all this was done in presence of enemies ever ready to attack the exhausted combatants, ever eager to treat both as their lawful prey. So, consciously or unconsciously, from earliest times, as each state had risen to power, it had aimed at more than guaranteeing its own existence: it had aimed at absorbing others, and so forming an empire state which should be co-extensive with the civilized world, and the head of which should uphold civilization against barbarism. Such is the better side of the various attempts at universal empire. But those attempts had been unsuccessful. Persia and Athens had failed, and no other state of purely Greek origin had been able to replace Athens with success. Macedon, the heir of Greece, had succeeded for a time in organizing the oriental world, but had been unequal to more. The

task had devolved on Rome. The victory at Numantia marks the point at which Rome may be said to have accomplished this task, so far as conquest was concerned; the point at which its external action becomes of subordinate interest, and the questions that agitated it within assume the most prominent position. But in the subsequent steps of securing and organizing the conquests made, the senate of Rome was found as incompetent as it proved in relation to internal affairs. Exclusively Roman, it looked on the world prostrate at its feet as a legitimate prey, which it might misgovern and plunder at discretion. Julius Cæsar formed a different conception of the position and consequent duty of his country. With the truest policy, not the less beneficial to the Roman world because it furthered his own supremacy, he first added materially to the security of that world by the conquest of Gaul, the home of the most inveterate and most dangerous enemy of Rome. He then, with the army he had formed in Gaul, seized the supreme power at Rome, and set himself deliberately to the task of extending, so far as was required, and of securing and organizing within the limits attained, the Roman empire. The labour was interrupted by his death, but resumed by his successor. So, with reference to the past, not merely from the Roman, but from the widest point of view attainable, do we find a justification of the Roman empire, as

with reference to the future we find the same in the success which attended it, in the cheerful obedience rendered to it by its subjects at its commencement; in the contented, nay proud, acquiescence of all the nations that formed the civilized world in their incorporation into the Roman name.

But this is a point which, as interwoven with all the subsequent history, will from time to time recur. I pass from it, therefore, at present, and from these preliminary remarks, to state the divisions which I propose to adopt, the period which each lecture will comprise.

The first will carry the history down to the accession of Commodus, the point rightly chosen by Gibbon as the commencement of the decline and fall. In the 200 years which compose this period, we have the settlement and mature strength of the empire. There is no other parallel series of events to distract our attention from its political and social condition. There are no indications of approaching decline of a nature to excite grave apprehension. If you would form a just judgment of the successful action of Rome upon the world, it is here that you must in the main look for your materials.

The second lecture, beginning with the accession of Commodus, will end with the final victory of Constantine over Licinius, when the imperial power divided by Diocletian was again concentrated in one

hand (A.D. 324, A.U.C. 1078). This second period is shorter (144 years), but more full of incident, and with less of unity.

The third lecture will extend from the reunion of the empire under Constantine to its final division under the sons of Theodosius (A.D. 395, A.U.C. 1149), 71 years.

The fourth will embrace the remaining 81 years, the dissolution of the Empire of the West, and the successive occupation by the barbarians of its several provinces. It is the fall of that which in strict accuracy is the Roman Empire, the Latin, the European portion of the monarchy consolidated under Augustus. (A.D. 476, A.U.C. 1230.)

Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus, known to the history of Rome and of the world by the title he assumed later of Augustus, after the battle of Actium and the death of his rival, the world's great triumvir, Mark Antony, stood sole master of the civilized world. The favourite, the grand-nephew, the adopted son of the dictator Cæsar, the heir of his policy, the traditional head, consequently, of the popular party, he had, in the then state of political affairs, nothing to dread but the dagger of the assassin, which had proved fatal to his uncle. But there was a material difference in the position of the two statesmen in this respect. The conspiracy formed against Cæsar had been formed by the leaders of a great party, invoking the specious

names of liberty and the republic, of the senate and people of Rome. But even the most fanatical of the senatorial party must have recognised in the events that followed on the murder of the dictator, in the immediate helplessness of the conspirators, in their final defeat, and in the total extinction of the hopes that had been held out, the wasteful folly of their act, the utter inutility of any attempt at imitation. Here and there might be found one perverse enough not to accept the judgment of events, but the party of which the conspirators were the leaders could not but have acquiesced in it, even if no proscription such as that of the second triumvirate had wasted its ranks. So, at the age of thirty-three, Augustus might resume the interrupted work. If his genius was inferior, his conception poorer than that of his predecessor, in compensation for this inferiority, the necessity for the work was more manifest, and the readiness to accept him in Rome, if not in the provinces, incalculably greater.

In his early years, Augustus had been constantly in the society of Julius. The dictator had unquestionably looked on him as his successor, as the man to whom he should hand over, to govern in peaceful and unchallenged supremacy, the fabric of empire which his genius had conceived, and his own hand should have fashioned. He had taken him with him on his later expeditions, and the active

and sagacious mind of the boy could not fail to reap much from such converse. Though probably as yet incapable of grasping in their fulness the mature conceptions of the ripe statesman with whom he lived, it must yet have received many seeds, and the outlines of the plans to which he listened were filled up as he himself advanced in years and experience.

Since the time when, on the death of his adopted father, he repaired to Rome, to claim the inheritance of his name and fortune, to avenge his murder, and doubtless with the ulterior hope of asserting for himself a position analogous to that of the dictator, since that time till the defeat and death of Antonius, fourteen years had elapsed. They had been years of struggle, of dissimulation, and of danger. But they had also necessitated the exertion of every faculty of the statesman and the governor, and at their close both those capacities were developed in Augustus to a very high degree. By birth, then, he had been destined for the task, his early education and connexion had been calculated to fit him for it, his position and circumstances had consummated these advantages, and with the coolest and maturest judgment he could estimate its difficulties, appreciate the elements of his power, and the guarantees of his success. In the years which, after his final success in Egypt, he passed in the East, he had leisure, whilst he settled the affairs of

that portion of his empire, calmly to review his position and the labours it involved. His task was twofold. He had to consolidate the Empire, so as to secure it from attacks from without. He had to organize its whole internal administration, in the widest sense of the term. We shall see later what that term involves. For the present, we shall direct our attention to the first point.

I need not here enumerate the various provinces which the senate of Rome had, by its constant policy of aggression, added to its dominion of Italy. In former lectures, you have had placed before you the progress of the Roman arms under the Republic up to the last great addition made—that of Gaul by Cæsar. Augustus himself, before Actium, as governor of the western part of the Empire, had made some not unimportant conquests. He had broken the power of the Salassi, a warlike Alpine tribe, and annexed to the Empire the large district that lies between the Save and Epirus, Pannonia and Dalmatia. At the period at which these lectures begin, whilst there remained to the eye of the Roman statesman no very formidable power—none, for instance, that could at all compare in importance with that of Gaul before its conquest—still there was left much to be done by one who would complete the work of the Republic, carry out the traditional policy of Rome, and do her appointed work of incorporating in one great body all the

nations that were capable of receiving benefit from such incorporation.

To whatever frontier of the Empire Augustus looked, he was sensible of incompleteness. The relations of Rome with Parthia, the only other great monarchy then existing, were not such as to satisfy him. In the language of a Roman historian, 'The Parthians and the Romans, the one by the loss of Crassus, the other by the defeat of Pacorus, the great victory of Ventidius, had had sufficient evidence of each other's power. With feelings of mutual respect, they had placed their intercourse on a friendly footing, and Antonius himself had made a treaty with the Parthian king.' But, unfortunately for Rome, Antonius had not persevered in this wise policy; and though Augustus, after Actium, was accepted as arbiter by the Parthians, and was throughout treated with high respect by their monarch, still the two empires were never, as consistently as they should have been, firm allies—the position dictated, in the strongest manner, by the mutual interest of two states, neither of which could hope to conquer the other. More especially was it the interest of Rome, whose other frontiers were so liable to constant attacks. For the present, however, Augustus re-arranged, on a friendly footing, the relations of Rome with its eastern rival. He reduced Egypt to a Roman province, but jealously guarded it by restrictions, so as

to keep its administration in the closest possible connexion with himself. He confirmed Herod on the throne of Judea, settled the affairs of Syria, Armenia, and Asia Minor, and conceived the plan of conquering Arabia, and so rounding off the south-eastern possessions of Rome. But his generals were unable to effect this conquest. Lastly, by the incorporation, on various terms, of the states that occupied the coast of the Euxine or Black Sea, the completion, so far as was possible, of the Roman dominion eastwards was accomplished. Of the other frontiers, Africa as the easiest, and, from its natural circumstances, the least important, may be at once noticed. The comparatively narrow strip of territory that lies along the coast of the Mediterranean, between that sea and the Great Desert, occupied by various barbarian tribes, was included, in great measure, within the limits of the Empire, and formed into distinct provinces and dependent kingdoms. From that quarter, since Carthage fell, Rome never had been seriously threatened; nor during the existence of the Empire of the West was there any danger from the native African tribes, though there were, from time to time, occasions for the exercise of the Roman arms against the border populations of Mount Atlas and the Desert.

But whilst Augustus might turn with a feeling of security from the east and south, he could have no such feeling when his eye surveyed the other

frontiers of his Empire. They yet demanded unceasing vigilance and great efforts; there, far more than elsewhere, was the work of conquest not merely incomplete, but threatened with danger. It has often been remarked that the chain of the Alps has been no real protection to Italy; that in all periods of her history that barrier has been easily forced. Whether for conquest or defence, whether it be Augustus or Napoleon, no one can trust to it as a safeguard. The policy of Augustus was directed, first, to the entire subjugation of all the Alpine tribes, and so to the obtaining complete hold of the chain itself; secondly, to the carrying forward the Roman frontier to the line of the Danube, along the whole course of that river parallel to Italy. Nor was this all. He aimed at making the eastern or lower Danube his frontier in that quarter, and with this view his stepson, Tiberius, wielding the full force of the Empire, in a long and difficult war, carried the Roman sway far down its banks, among those Illyrian and Sarmatian tribes who are described as so barbarous that they did not understand what peace meant. There remained as a subject for anxiety the frontier of the Rhine. Here again the Empire assumed the aggressive. The line of garrisons and forts established on the Danube found a parallel in similar lines along the Rhine, the Meuse, the Elbe, and the Weser. But here alone the proverbial fortune of Augustus failed

him. The defeat of Varus and the loss of three legions so alarmed him that he gave up all thought of conquest, fell back on the Rhine as his frontier, and left it as a maxim of policy to his successors that they should not attempt to pass beyond it, nor undertake to reduce Germany.

Such was the policy of Augustus with reference to the frontier nations—such the measure of his success. He left, as you may observe, four sources of danger: one which former experience enabled the Romans to estimate—viz., the Parthian monarchy; three others, Arabia, Germany, and Scythia, which they could not have adequate grounds for correctly appreciating. But the comparative barbarism and disorganization of all these nations might justify the Roman statesmen of that time in throwing aside any apprehensions of danger from them, and in looking on the vast territories actually included within the limits already attained, both as secure from without and as amply sufficient to employ all their energies within. Still, whilst we allow this justification, we may, I think, question the wisdom of the resolution adopted by Augustus, to remain for the future on the defensive. I name the point here, but reserve it for discussion at a later opportunity, when speaking of Trajan.

There remained within the limits of the Empire, setting aside occasional disturbances, one enemy to subdue, not of sufficient power to be dangerous,

but troublesome from its obstinate bravery. This was the Cantabrian race, the mountain tribes of the north of Spain. This race subdued, the language of the Roman historians is justified, that everywhere there was peace, either the peace of good order within, or the peace of definite treaties with foreign nations. Never hitherto had the majesty of the Roman name been so felt and acknowledged. From all neighbouring, and from many distant nations, there came embassies to invite the arbitration or to pay respect to the greatness of Augustus. No outward impediment existed to the performance of the second part of his task, the internal organization of his vast dominions.

This was the harder part of that task, and for its accomplishment he inherited less from the republic than he did for the former. I have been treating of the frontiers of the Empire and of its neighbour kingdoms. Take those same frontiers, and look from them inwards, not outwards. Let your eye range along the coast of the ocean, the Rhine, the Danube, the Euphrates, the deserts of Arabia and Africa, and trace the countries included within those limits, the countries grouped around the Mediterranean sea. Think what discordant elements they offered to the plastic touch of the Roman emperors. You have Egypt, with its indigenous civilization, the earliest in the records of history; with its imported Greek civilization,

that of the Ptolemies. You have the wild tribes bordering on the Libyan desert, in the highest degree unsusceptible of culture and discipline. There is the Spanish nation with its apparently indomitable powers of resistance. In Gaul there are the Celtic tribes lately subdued, but by no means as yet fashioned to the yoke, nourishing warm aspirations for national independence, and encouraged in them by the tenacious superstition of the Druid priesthood. There are the complex races of Italy itself. There are the mountaineers of the Alps; the tribes, German or Scythian, bordering on the Danube; and the inhabitants of Thrace. So far for the western world and its elements. Side by side with them, and presenting no less difficulty, lie Greece and the eastern world, the dominion of Alexander, the home of the actual civilization of Rome, the source whence it drew its literature and its religion. But this Greco-Macedonian constituent is not in itself homogeneous. It is but the surface that is Greek, except in Greece Proper. In Asia Minor we find the Gaul, the Thracian, the Isaurian; in Syria there is an incongruous blending of Syrian and Greek, the effeminate voluptuousness of the one with the language and cultivation of the other. There are besides these the remnants of Phœnician civilization. And, last and most intractable of all, there is the Jew, brooding over his political degradation, anticipating the early

advent of a deliverer, and cherishing wide schemes of grandeur and empire. Before the battle of Actium, Augustus had been familiar with the west. It was to acquire a similar familiarity with the east that we may conceive him to have stayed so long there, after his triumphant occupation of Egypt. However this may be, the mere enumeration of the nations and separate civilizations with which he had to deal may suffice to give an idea of the difficulty of his work.

The idea, the predominant idea, that guided Augustus and his successors, even the unworthiest of them, had been conceived and matured by the dictator Cæsar, and had been floating, in a shape more or less definite, before the minds of others. As Alexander had wished to reduce his vast empire, with its two elements, Greek and Oriental, to unity, so would the Roman emperors proceed with their still more vast and more complex dominions. A unity of administration, unity of law, unity in point of political rights, unity of language, unity of religion, unity in the true sense, not the extirpation, but the harmonizing of differences—such, more or less consciously, was the object of the imperial government. It is its peculiar glory to have succeeded in this object more than any previous or succeeding government. But in the realization of this object there was no room for hurry or impatience. Much must be left to time

and the gradual progress of events and of thought. We must remember, too, that in many points the leading idea would not be fully appreciated by all equally. I have little doubt, for instance, that in the mind of the dictator Cæsar, it was far more pregnant than in that of Augustus. The latter was more cautious, also more exclusively Roman, while from a very early period Julius Cæsar had been the hope of the different nationalities and races, which in the various provinces groaned under the capricious tyranny of the senatorial government. So without for a moment saying that all the objects mentioned above—in other words, that the idea of unity in its full logical consequences, was present to the mind of Augustus or any other statesman of Rome, we may yet say that it guided their steps and controlled their actions to its progressive attainment. Whilst Augustus, for instance, may have aimed principally at that which was then most needed, administrative unity, Claudius advanced further, and aimed at unity of political rights.

On the details of the imperial administration I need not enter, neither need I on those of the military organization of the Empire. Twenty-five legions secured internal quiet, and peace on the frontier. His own personal safety and the quiet of Rome were guaranteed by a select body of troops, an imperial and municipal guard. In name and outward show only the first citizen of the republic,

he skilfully concentrated in his hands all the powers of the state, military, civil, and religious; and the genuine Roman meaning of the word 'prince' rapidly merged in its more modern acceptation. Nominally, he governed only the frontier provinces; in reality, he exercised all the functions of government throughout all the provinces. The change was most acceptable. It was not only the flatterers of his court that spoke of him as a god upon earth, in full sincerity the provincials worshipped him as such. To them the imperial government, with its peace and regular order, was as the government of a beneficent Providence, and they gratefully erected temples to its organ.

The character of Augustus has been variously handled by writers from Tacitus downwards, and there is ample material for various judgments. I cannot but think that, on the whole, he deserves a more favourable judgment than that commonly passed on him. A statesman of comprehensive view and high ability, he seems to me one of those on whom power exercises a beneficial effect, who, unscrupulous in their means of seizing it, find that, when seized, it is not to be exercised solely for themselves, but allow its responsibilities to mature and soften their character; who find their interest and their glory rather in the welfare of their subjects than in the gratification of their own passions or caprice.

I said just now that Augustus concentrated in his own person all the powers of government. The manner in which he did this has often been described, and I need not enter on it here. But there are one or two points on which I must touch. The institution of the censorship, with whatever of moral influence there attached to it, was perpetuated under a new name, and, by his assumption of the office of Pontifex Maximus he also wielded whatever religious influence the state religion of Rome allowed. That religion had at all times been profoundly political, an engine of government rather than of religion. The spiritual element, that is, had always been kept in the background, or rather, it had been merged in the temporal. And with the temporal power so intensified and concentrated as it had now become, this uniting with it what little spiritual power there was left, is a consideration of serious importance, especially in these two aspects: that it diminished the possibility of establishing any wholesome check on the misuse of that temporal power, and that, by identifying the emperor with the religious system, it made it almost inevitable that any reform of that religious system, or the substitution of any new one, would find in him an uncompromising opponent. The consequences of this will attract our attention more in the sequel. I may add that, so entirely was the character of the Roman religion political, that the apotheosis of the

emperors, the paying them divine honours, whether in life or after their death, was but natural. The Romans had ever worshipped, more than any other god, the majesty and fortune of Rome. It was, then, I say, but natural that the emperor, the living personification of that majesty and that fortune, should receive the honours paid to the ideas which he embodied.

Passing from the moral and spiritual side of his power, it should not escape us, that in civil matters Augustus himself and his successors clung with peculiar tenacity to the tribunitian power. On this, again, I would say a few words. For at first sight it seems an anomaly in their position, one of those fictions of government which we, who pride ourselves on a constitutional government, think so natural, but which would strike observers as entirely out of place in a system so real and direct as the Roman Empire. But we must remember that the position of the Cæsars was that of champions and representatives of the democracy of Rome. Political writers have seen that a democracy cannot compete permanently with an oligarchy, from the superior power of organization inherent in the latter. The democratical party at Rome had seen this, and had chosen leaders who should place themselves at its head, give unity to its plans, and, by the superior vigour of execution inherent in monocratic power, compensate for this its own

inferiority. It had first put forward the Gracchi, and had, from its want of organization and misconception of their situation, seen them fall victims to their championship. It had then fixed with great sagacity on Marius, with his admirable military talents, as the successor of the Gracchi; but the youth and fortune of Sulla had enabled him to crush the party of his rival. Julius Cæsar was its third great leader, and with undeviating steadiness the popular instinct bore him forward to absolute power. That instinct taught the people that a great military chief, who could guarantee order and secure them against their own want of combination, was the ruler under whom they were most likely to realize their objects, to attain security from oligarchical misgovernment, and admission, when capable, to participation in political power. The Cæsars then inherited all the traditions of this party. With the Gracchi, they represented the cause of the poor against the rich, of the Roman people against the Optimates; with Marius, and more consistently than Marius, they represented the parties just mentioned, and the cause of the Italians against the exclusive pretensions of Rome. And advancing still further, they represented more and more, as their power became more and more settled, the interests of the provinces and dependent states, as against Roman, or rather Italian, domination.

Nor can we hesitate to allow that they were

worthy of their high position, that in the hands of the emperors, speaking with the generality necessary in such lectures, the trust reposed was not abused. Vigorous asserters and guardians of order, they never on the other side forgot the peculiarity of their mission as chiefs and protectors of the interests of the many. They were the tribunes of the Empire, no longer of the Roman plebs, with a veto on all acts of misgovernment and oppression, which they never failed to exercise, not merely within the walls of Rome, but throughout the whole of their vast dominions. No petty, no oligarchical interests found favour in their eyes. Under their fostering care law became not Roman but human, the embodiment of the principles of justice which all allowed, not of those sanctioned by one peculiar social system. Whatever had been harsh in the treatment of the wife, the child, the slave; whatever inequality existed between Roman and provincial; all such harshness, all such inequality, it was their duty, a duty acknowledged by them and performed, to mitigate and remove. They absorbed, it is true, all power, and in so doing they necessarily introduced a weakness into the system; but the power absorbed was wielded in the interest of humanity, not of one narrow municipality. They were, in short, what rulers ought to be, and have so seldom been, a terror, not to good works, but to the evil; they bore not the sword of justice in vain;

and it is my firm belief that, when the precept of St. Paul as to submission is quoted in favour of unconditional submission to constituted authority, even when in the hands of a Nero, it is really in substance misquoted; for that, as compared with all previous governments, such as the later experience of nations had witnessed, the government even of a Nero, by virtue of his position, was a positive gain. Wisely, then, did Augustus cling to the tribunitian power, rightly did he estimate it as the very keystone of his position, for he was prepared to act in the true spirit of a tribune, not restricting but enlarging its obligations; and neither for himself nor his successors to derogate in any way from the associations which the new or the old citizens of Rome might attach to that venerated name, in earlier times the instrument by which they had won their liberties, in later the sanction of their emperor's responsibility.

I may seem to have been dwelling too long on the reign of the first Roman emperor, yet if we rightly master his position, and the policy then initiated, it will throw great light on the succeeding period. The immediate successor of Augustus is one whose character can hardly be said to have been variously judged. Roman writers may differ, but the panegyric of Velleius Paterculus has not, in the estimation of posterity, been allowed to weigh against the picture drawn by Tacitus. And with

few dissentient voices, Tiberius has been the object of reprobation. Criticising the remark of Napoleon, Niebuhr has justly pointed out, what in fact is clear from Tacitus, that at different periods of his life, Tiberius was very different. But it is the horrors of the sojourn at Capreae that have coloured for posterity his whole life. not without injustice, as I think. A minute analysis, however, of his character and actions, which should apportion duly praise and blame, and should show where his circumstances palliated his conduct, would be out of place here. Of one thing I am clear, that he who places himself before the bust of the Emperor Tiberius, and marks its truly imperial proportions, will feel at once, that he whom it represents could be no weak character for good or for evil; that he must have been in ability eminent amongst mankind, a great and wise governor, if his lot allowed it; but if he turned to evil, whether cruelty or lust, no scruples would be likely to check him. The singular fact of his life is, that in a measure he combined both. As emperor of Rome, or rather of the Roman world, he presided over the republic with a high and grave moderation. It was the part of a good shepherd, he said, to shear, not to skin his sheep. And the provinces of Rome, which had enjoyed the rule of Augustus, found equal satisfaction in that of Tiberius, and repaid him with equal gratitude.

He was fifty-six when he ascended the throne,

and age and disposition alike inclined him to accept the maxim of Augustus, and not to carry forward the limits of his empire. Within those limits he made but few changes. Such as they were, they were all in the right direction. Cappadocia became a Roman province, and many of the kings who had been suffered to exist in a state of half independence, were artfully induced to visit Rome, and detained at the imperial court. Their dominions, of course, in their absence, were governed more thoroughly on the imperial system. The aim of his internal administration was in the provinces to continue the system of Augustus, and by quiet and wise economy, at once to husband their resources and to foster their growing union; whilst at Rome he strengthened his position by the concentration of his Prætorian guard, and by crushing all that was independent in the senate, every element of resistance which a long peace and consequent forgetfulness of the evils of civil war might have nurtured. At the same time he wished to exalt in other respects the senate, and, under cover of its ancient name, to mask to the Roman world the Imperial despotism. The position of the Cæsars was essentially hostile to the old aristocracy, and with relentless cruelty Tiberius carried on the war against any remnant of it, or any revival of its spirit. But the position of the Cæsars, in the space now under review, also led them to wish for a permanent and

influential council of state; the representative, not of the Roman patricians with their associations in the past, but the representative of the merit, Italian or provincial, which could act in frank alliance with the new system. Their senate, in a word, should be not the senate of Rome, but the senate or council of the civilized world. This is the part of the Imperial organization which is most definitely connected with the name of Tiberius.

The reigns of his three successors offer but isolated points of interest. To talk of the policy of a madman like Caligula would be absurd, yet the blind expression of his ferocious hatred for the senate and people of Rome, is not entirely without meaning. It was the exaggeration of that side of the Imperial policy which marked them out as representatives of their empire, as distinct from the exclusively Roman element, an idea we shall find recurring in later emperors. Claudius has been generally looked on as an idiot, or nearly so; yet there are facts incompatible with this view. Mauritania, Britain, and Thrace were added to the Empire in his reign, the former completely, the latter only partially. This of itself would say little for him, but his thoughtful and tender care for the provinces deserves high commendation, and his policy in opening the senate to the nobles of part of Gaul, running counter, as it did, to the prejudices of that body, was extremely wise. The speech

in which he advocated the measure is a very statesmanlike production. He was himself born in Gaul, and his sympathies were therefore the more active in her behalf. Generally it has been remarked, that he leant most to the western portion of his empire; and he showed his right appreciation of the means adapted to secure its unity, by his zeal in spreading the Latin language. Nero, on the contrary, leant to the eastern, the Greek portion. There his talents, those on which he prided himself in a singularly un-Roman spirit, so that dying he regretted, not the emperor, but the artist, his talents for music and singing, and the games, found more ready acceptance than at Rome, where the most degraded might yet blush for the degradation of their emperor. There in life was the stronghold of his popularity; there, even after death, he remained popular. The strength of the political position of the Cæsars is manifest from the fact, that all the atrocities of his life, and of those of his predecessors, domestic and public, could not shake that position during so long a period. Such was the acceptance of the empire by the nations, such their gratitude to the Cæsars for the new policy they had inaugurated.

The death of Nero, the last heir of the Cæsarian house, was followed by a convulsion. It was the West that had risen against him, in the person of the Aquitanian Vindex. But it was Spain that furnished

the next emperor, Servius Sulpicius Galba. For the first time a Roman emperor was created in the provinces. It was a new light that broke upon the legions—it was the divulging of a secret of the Empire, that an emperor need not necessarily be created at Rome. Galba was accepted by his own small force and by the army in Gaul, but on his murder by the Prætorians, at the instigation of Otho, the two powerful armies that guarded the Eastern and the Western frontiers, the legions of Syria and Germany, the strength of the Roman military system, and the protectors of the Roman state, declined to acquiesce in the nomination of the household troops, and raised their respective generals to the supreme power. Otho fell before Vitellius and the German legions. Vitellius in his turn was defeated by the generals of Vespasian, whose success was partly due to their rapidity of movement, partly to the treachery of his opponents, partly also to the superior weight of his character, which had long directed upon him the public attention. The result was most fortunate. The dark time of the tyrants passed away, and a cloudless calm succeeded. There had been a long thirty years of misgovernment and waste. To this had been added the shorter storm of the civil war. In Vespasian, the Roman world found a governor adequate to its wants; one who has not had full justice done him. He replaced the empire in the

position in which Tiberius had left it, strong and well-ordered, both internally and externally; and he did more than Tiberius, for, by his own simple and pure life, he effected a very marked improvement in the state of public morals. Vespasian threw aside all recollections of old enmities, and was slow at taking offence from his friends. Even under considerable provocation, he contented himself with a mild hint to Mucianus. He dealt gently with the agents of his predecessors' tyranny, for his experience had taught him that the majority obey with reluctance, and from fear, a tyrant's mandates of cruelty. What was harder still, he dealt gently with those who conspired against himself, for they were led to do so, he said, by ignorance of the burden and annoyance of supreme power. At home and abroad, his government was equally respected. The Parthians stood in awe of him, and kept peace. Palestine, Cilicia, and Comagene were added to the list of provinces, as were also the hitherto free states of Rhodes, Byzantium, and Samos. The finances of the Empire were restored by an administration which, though thrifty, was not mean. The money which he collected was freely spent when a worthy occasion presented itself. The senate, depressed by the contempt and thinned by the cruelty of Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, was raised in numbers and in position. Rome was restored, and the cities throughout the Empire

were liberally assisted. Everywhere was felt the hand of a great ruler, one devoted to his task, bending all his energies to it, and making his whole method of life subservient to its right performance. 'Set me on my feet,' he said to his attendants, when he felt his death imminent; 'an Emperor should leave the world standing.'

Titus died too soon to require any detailed notice. The world had expected a Nero, but his short reign was so different, that his merits were, perhaps, exaggerated. Nero even had begun well—so well, as to merit the praise of Trajan. On Domitian I need not dwell. It was a reign of terror for all that was eminent at Rome; but his cruelty is the cruelty of one who lived in constant alarm himself—not the pure, wanton, reckless cruelty, the offspring of their sense of power, which had characterized Caligula and Nero. And his government was marked by disasters abroad, by severe defeats of the Roman armies in Dacia, and by an ignominious peace. On the other hand, Britain was completely reduced by Agricola, and there were successes in Germany. Domitian was upheld by the dread of civil war, and by the support of the Prætorian guards. He fell by a conspiracy within his own palace, where he had finally become an object of dread. Yet even of Domitian it is recorded, that he was a most just administrator of justice, and that he did not neglect the interests of

learning. Still, as far as we can judge, to all but the Prætorians, who avenged him and could not forgive his successor, his death brought a feeling of great relief.

With Galba, the empire had passed from Rome; with Nerva, it passed from Italy. The family of the Cæsars, by inheritance or adoption, had expired with Nero. The twelve Cæsars, the line of Italian emperors, end with Domitian. From the accession of Nerva, himself a Cretan, the emperors are provincials. From this point of view, as marking this transition, and also on the ground of his adoption of Trajan as his successor, not from any connexion with him, but from so happy a choice that it is spoken of as the direct inspiration of the gods, Nerva is remarkable; otherwise, his short reign might pass unnoticed. As it is, it would be unjust not to mention him under whose auspices a new era dawned upon the human race.

Since the foundation of the monarchy, 127 years had passed, years of peace unbroken within, except by one great convulsion, and in which the wars on the frontiers had been, in the main, useful rather than burdensome, maintaining the discipline and efficiency of the soldier, and making valuable additions to the Empire.

M. Ulpius Trajanus was by birth a Spaniard. The Spanish race, so difficult to subdue, had, it would appear, when subdued, more rapidly than any

other, assimilated the civilization of its conquerors. At the age of forty-two, Trajan was called from the armies of Germany to occupy the throne of the Cæsars; and the manner in which he filled it stamped him as its legitimate possessor—the legitimate successor, I say not, of Augustus, but of the great dictator himself. He reviewed the past history and present position of the Roman world; and whilst he carried on, as ably as any of his predecessors, their work of organization and unity, he determined, in the interests of posterity, to set aside the maxim of Augustus, to resume the policy of the Republic and of Cæsar, to extend the limits of the Empire, and by extending them, to guard against a danger both actual and foreseen, the civilization of the world.

One must speak with all hesitation on such a subject, yet I cannot but think that Augustus was wrong in suffering the defeat of Varus so entirely to paralyse and arrest the progress of conquest. I cannot but think that the second Cæsar should have continued the work of the first, and after consolidating his empire on all its frontiers, should have thrown its united forces upon Germany, from the Rhine to the Vistula, and annexed it, as Julius Cæsar had annexed Gaul. If the state of affairs, and the exhaustion consequent on the civil wars, rendered this unadvisable in his time and in that of his successor, yet it should be a subject of regret, I

think, that there was this necessity for inaction, and the praise generally accorded to the policy of Augustus should be much more limited than it is. It may have been prudent to yield for a time, but the object of so yielding should have been to recruit the exhausted strength for future efforts.

Trajan seems to have felt that the strength was recruited, and the time come for resuming the offensive. The majesty of the Roman name had suffered under Domitian, and he avenged it; but he was not content with simply avenging it. The Danube was no longer to be the boundary of the empire. In the Dacian war he wrested from the tribes on the left bank of that river a wide territory, which he formed into the Roman province of Dacia. He meant this to be a permanent addition, and he took all the steps necessary to secure it, by the formation of roads, by the construction of a magnificent bridge, by strong fortified camps, and by peopling it with Roman colonists. An attentive consideration of the position of this new colony will show what was the object of Trajan. It occupied, without going into great accuracy, the district that lies northwards of the Danube about as far as the Pruth, and its boundaries on the east and the west were respectively the Euxine and the Theiss. It comprised Transylvania, the Banat, Wallachia and Moldavia. What Trajan wished was, in a different sense and from a different point of view, that

which the Czar wished last year in regard to part of the same country. It was a material guarantee. But Trajan wished a guarantee for Rome against the barbarian tribes that lay eastward of the Pruth. He wished to anticipate their attacks, to close up the great road which there lies open, and by strongly guarding the pass between the Euxine and the Carpathian mountains, to protect the whole valley of the Danube. It will not escape notice that in thus resuming the aggressive policy, which really after all may be termed as correctly, defensive, Trajan chose a different quarter, the lower Danube, not the middle and lower Rhine, as the scene of his operations. As far as I know, his exact motives are left to conjecture. For it is evident that he might have been content with defeating the Dacians, and then have carried the Roman dominion on to the Elbe, so anticipating the labours of Charlemagne. And in some respects this would have been the more systematic course. But possibly he judged it wiser to accept the field of battle offered him, and to arrive at the same result by another means. Whilst Rome held the great province I have described, Germany between it and the Rhine would have been made accessible on three sides—the south, the east, and the west—to the gradual but sure progress of civilization. By multiplying the points of contact, Rome might have attained as great and quite as secure results as by a definite

attempt at conquest, which would have roused the nation attacked and thrown it back on the more barbarous elements on its rear. As it was, this new province was a formidable wedge driven into the mass of barbarism, separating its western and less barbarous from the eastern and more barbarous portion. However this may be, Trajan's success was complete, and the language of the province he annexed, still, after long centuries, bears testimony to that success. Having so far guaranteed himself towards Germany and Scythia, he turned his arms eastward. He renewed or commenced a state of intimacy with various states along the eastern coasts of the Black Sea, and on the southern side of the chain of Caucasus, as well as with the tribes on the edge of the highlands of Armenia, and he made successful war on the Parthian and the Arabian. This was not, I believe, from the mere love of military glory, the supposition of those who hardly estimate aright the consistent greatness of that imperial man, but in the same spirit as that in which he had annexed Dacia, a far-sighted attempt to guarantee Rome against the tribes that inhabited the vast peninsula of Arabia. And we, who know that the eastern half of Trajan's dominions was torn from his successors by those tribes, may do more justice than his contemporaries to the accuracy of his vision. Too early for his Empire, he died at Seleucia, not distinguished for learning,

moderately gifted with the power of expression, but most richly endowed with the higher gifts of command, of government, and of administration, one of the wisest and justest of rulers, one who was ever seeking to perfect the law where it might be found inadequate, whilst he guarded what was existing and adequate,—one whom the senate, in this respect the correct organ of the general feeling, pointed to at a later date as the type of a good emperor. He is the second of the two heathen whom Dante admits into his Paradise.

The successor of Trajan was, like Trajan, a Spaniard, but, if we may trust our accounts, which throughout this period are sadly meagre, his policy and his disposition were different, though not so much so as it has been thought. In the Dacian conquests of Trajan he acquiesced, though reluctantly. It was pointed out to him that the abandonment of that new province would be a disgraceful betrayal of the Roman citizens planted there. I could believe also that his own judgment sanctioned the acquisition, and saw its value as a barrier. The Eastern conquests of Trajan he gave up. It was his judgment that in this respect Augustus was right, and that the Euphrates was the natural boundary of the two great monarchies. And I cannot but think that, so far as the Parthian or Persian monarchy was concerned, all the subsequent history justifies this view, both in Augustus

and in Hadrian, without its being necessary to have recourse to jealousy as the motive of the latter. Such was Hadrian's foreign policy, and during his reign scarcely a skirmish broke the profound peace on the frontier. Such peace suited his genius. He was gifted with an eminent capacity for organization and administration. His immense industry mastered all details, his vast memory retained them. On foot and bare-headed he might be seen traversing every province of his empire, seeing with his own eyes its state and wants, and with a liberal hand supplying those wants. The finances in good order, the soldiers cared for, yet held in strictest discipline, the administrative or civil service of the empire arranged, the cities in every province enlarged and beautified and provided with governments, mild regulations with regard to the slaves, such are the features of the emperor Hadrian's government, which may well be allowed to outweigh some real defects and apparently many weaknesses. In his policy towards the Christians he was more consistent than Trajan, checking with a firmer hand any attempts to crush them by popular violence, any straining of the laws against them. His love of building led him to found a new city on the site of Jerusalem, and the insult to the Jewish name and the disappointment to the Jewish hopes which was involved in this foundation of a Roman colony, with its heathen temples, on the ground where the

temple of Solomon, their holy and beautiful house, had stood, led to one of the fiercest and last outbreaks of the Jews. It was crushed with merciless severity, but the moment after it was crushed a change was adopted, and the remnant of the Jewish nation found itself treated with unexampled leniency. The treatment was successful, and the Jews acquiesced in their lot of political inferiority.

Hadrian died 'in a green old age,' such is the expression used, 'a changeful, manifold, many-sided man, cruel at times and lustful, yet holding, as by natural instinct, with an even hand, the reins of his disposition, and swaying it as of his own will, now to the worse, now to the better side.' He had adopted an unworthy favourite, but fortunately for his empire, death carried him off, and Hadrian's choice fell on Antoninus Pius, a native of Nismes in Narbonnese Gaul. The accounts of his reign have almost a fabulous sound about them. There were troubles, it is true, in various parts of the empire, but not sufficient to qualify the general character of the period. It was as though the legendary age of Numa had returned. Unlike his predecessor, he remained stationary at the centre of his empire. No position seemed to him so favourable for the discharge of his duty, nowhere else could complaints of misgovernment so easily reach him, and to such complaints his ear was ever open; nowhere else could he receive with so much

dignity the various embassies that came to him as to Augustus from distant countries,—Hyrcania, Bactria, India,—to solicit his arbitration or to offer their homage. For, bent on guarding and governing wisely his provinces, he had no thought of aggression, and he sought for the Roman empire the friendship of all neighbouring kings. Emperor of the civilized world, which he ordered by the sole weight of his character, he held out to other nations an example of moderation and good government. Adopting the limits fixed by Hadrian, abandoning, that is, Arabia and any acquisitions east of the Euphrates, and retaining Dacia, he hoped by the sight of the effects of peace and order, at once to check in the barbarians any aspirations after conquest, and to lead them to the imitation of so successful a policy. Not aggressive any longer by its arms, the Empire should effect the subtler but more efficacious conquest of inoculating its neighbours with ideas of law and government. No longer the ruler, it should be, as I think Humboldt expresses it, the elder brother of mankind. It was an anticipation, a conception full of glory to those who formed it, and, like other such conceptions, prophetic, I believe, of its own ultimate realization. And civilized and barbarian alike, the one looking on him as a patron, the other as a father rather than as a master or an emperor, with one voice prayed for him, that, like the immortal gods, his

rule might have no end, and with one consent submitted their differences to his decision. Well might it be said of him, that he was a proof that the matured and disciplined character of a man needs not the stimulus of war or political exertion to preserve it, that it remains uncorrupted either by long peace or by unbroken leisure. You may think I have been exaggerating, I have only been translating the documents of history.

The second Antonine was worthy of the first, who had adopted him in accordance with the wish of Hadrian, his age rendering it necessary, in Hadrian's eyes, to postpone his association in the Empire. He was then eighteen. But it was well that he did not so early ascend the throne, but that he waited, under the eye of his predecessor, till ripe manhood and the age of forty-one. The maxims of government, which that predecessor had acted upon, were in no way changed, but the times had changed, and complicated evils visited the Roman Empire, calling for the utmost energy of administration both in peace and war. A Persian war was successfully terminated by the generals of his colleague. But the effects of victory and of the long peace and prosperity were unfortunately annihilated by a pestilence. So fearful was its violence, that it is said that in Rome, in Italy, and throughout the provinces, it carried off a large proportion, our accounts say, a large majority, of the inhabi-

tants ; and the armies had their full share of the loss. Paralysed by this visitation, the Roman world heard with alarm, that along the frontiers of the Danube, from Illyricum to Gaul, the barbarians had conspired for attack, stimulated, in all probability, by the exhaustion they witnessed. And a barbarian army penetrated as far as Aquileia, at the very gorge of Italy. The philosophic emperor was found equal to his position. The unfavourable criticism of Avidius Cassius, that M. Aurelius was discussing problems of philosophy, the nature of justice and of the soul, the distinction between right and wrong, but was not alive to the exigencies of the state, may have had their ground of truth ; but no such discussions interfered, so far as we can now judge, with the vigour of his action. He sold his own imperial furniture, his plate, and wardrobe, to meet the expenses ; he supplied the losses of the armies by desperate but necessary remedies, by arming slaves and gladiators, and by a large introduction of foreign troops into the service of the Empire. And in three years of fierce war, on a scale which reminded those read in history of the Punic wars, he drove back the enemies of Rome. So great was his success, that he had formed the plan of reducing into a Roman province the border north of the Danube, from Ratisbon to Dacia, extending inland as far as the northern limits of Bohemia. And he would have done it, we are told,

but that Avidius Cassius, in an evil hour for himself and the Empire, listened to the report of his emperor's death, and in the confidence of his own military skill, and trusting to the highly disciplined army which he had formed and commanded, proclaimed himself emperor. Thus interrupted, M. Aurelius had to consent to a cessation of hostilities. His domestic rival fell without difficulty. No support was given him anywhere when the falseness of the rumour was known. Then the emperor resumed his war, and continued it during three more glorious years. One other, had it been granted him, would have seen his earlier aspirations fulfilled, and the limits of the empire carried forward. But he died at Vienna, and for a century no emperor had either leisure or ability to renew his project.

In domestic matters, he had been, like his predecessor, a mild and diligent governor. He cultivated the good will of the senate; he was liberal in giving the citizenship to the provinces not yet admitted. So great, so wise was the government, that the governed forgot the calamities they suffered, or remembered only, in estimating his reign, the ability with which he had met them, attributing their sufferings not to their government, but to the will of heaven. In such a temper men will bear much, and with patience. For if wastefulness is the sting of taxation, misgovernment is the sting of misfortune; and where there is neither the one nor

the other, there man argues not, but submits; for he is prone almost to a fault to submission in such matters, even when wastefulness and maladministration are combined: a disposition of which our rulers, of a different stamp from the great men we have been treating of, though assuredly not governing, or pretending to govern, a less noble nation, seem inclined to avail themselves to the uttermost.

With M. Aurelius passes the fortunate period of the Roman Empire, the first of the series with which I have to deal. I have sketched, so far as I have been able, the reasons for its establishment, and the plan on which it was founded. I have stated the prominent idea which was present to the mind of its chiefs, the twofold work they had to do. I have narrated its fortunes, and estimated its governors. And if we strike the balance of its fortunes, and see the preponderance of good over evil, of peace over war, of growth and restoration over decay; still more, if we strike the balance of those governors, and see the preponderance of the fortunate, the able, and the good, over their opposites, not in mere number only, but in the duration of their power; if, lastly, when we have done this, we rapidly, yet carefully revolve the course of history, from its opening to our own time, I think I may fearlessly challenge any one to name a period of equal length and equal advantages to the human

race. The conditions on which this government depended, I shall discuss in my next lecture. I content myself here with the fact, that such a government did exist, and for so long a time. It has been said that arbitrary power degrades nations, and prevents great men from rising. I need not come forward as the advocate of arbitrary power, nor enter into a discussion of the ambiguities latent in that as in other political terms; but relatively to some positions such power may be needed; and the political student, in enunciating such an assertion as the one given above, will do well to examine this period, and see whether it does not compel him to qualify his statement. The Roman world was in no sense degraded by the imperial government during these 210 years. The fact is, that Rome, with all the vices of a capital, stands too prominently and too constantly before our eyes. The Roman world, distinct from Rome, rose itself, and raised by its reaction, that its capital and centre. And for great men, are there two centuries in any history which, matched with these, can afford an equal number of names eminent as those of the rulers of mankind? I doubt it very strongly.

From no blind spirit of admiration, nor from any rash depreciation of other times and other governments, but from a calm, historical, even critical survey of the age of the Cæsars, and of the Antonines, we may and shall be led to see why it is, that

even now, under altered conditions, and when the time for such government may seem to be past,—may seem to be without being so,—men yet study with deep interest, and name with high reverence, the Empire and the Emperors of Rome.



LECTURE II.

FROM COMMODUS TO CONSTANTINE.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

A.D. 180 ...	A.U.C. 933 ...	Commodus.
„ 192 ...	„ 945 ...	Pertinax.
„ 193 ...	„ 946 ...	Didius Julianus.
„ 193 ...	„ 946 ...	Septimius Severus.
„ 211 ...	„ 964 ...	Caracalla.
„ 217 ...	„ 970 ...	Macrinus.
„ 218 ...	„ 971 ...	Elagabalus.
„ 222 ...	„ 975 ...	Alexander Severus.
„ 235 ...	„ 988 ...	Maximinus.
„ 238 ...	„ 991 ...	{ The Gordians : Maximus, Balbinus, Gordian III.
„ 244 ...	„ 997 ...	Philip.
„ 248 ...	„ 1001 ...	The Secular Games.
„ 249 ...	„ 1002 ...	Decius, the Goths.
„ 251 ...	„ 1004 ...	{ Gallus, Hostilianus, Volusianus.
„ 253 ...	„ 1006 ...	Æmilianus, Valerian.
„ 260 ...	„ 1013 ...	Gallienus.
„ 268 ...	„ 1021 ...	Claudius.
„ 270 ...	„ 1023 ...	Aurelian.
„ 275 ...	„ 1028 ...	Tacitus.
„ 276 ...	„ 1029 ...	Probus.
„ 282 ...	„ 1035 ...	Carus.
„ 283 ...	„ 1036 ...	Carinus, Numerian.
„ 284 ...	„ 1037 ...	Diocletian.
„ 286 ...	„ 1039 ...	Diocletian and Maximian.
„ 305 ...	„ 1058 ...	Galerius, Constantius.
„ 306 ...	„ 1059 ...	Galerius, Constantine.
„ 311 ...	„ 1064 ...	Constantine, Licinius.
„ 324 ...	„ 1077 ...	Constantine sole emperor.

LECTURE II.

FROM COMMODUS TO CONSTANTINE.

The question of the succession and of the spiritual power—Commodus and the subsequent troubles—The armies on the frontier—Septimius Severus—A more purely military system adopted—The emperors from Severus to Gallienus—The tyrants—The army—Troubled state of the Empire from internal dissensions and the enemy on the frontier—New series of emperors after Gallienus—Claudius—Aurelian—Probus—Diocletian—His system of government—His abdication—The quarrels anterior to the elevation of Constantine.

THE length of the period embraced by my first lecture involved so many and such varied points of interest, that it compelled me to defer some questions which might have claimed attention. But even if I had not been compelled, there was a reason why I should defer them. It was desirable to look at the Roman Empire in its origin and maturity from the most favourable point of view. The darker side of the picture, the necessary qualifications of the view taken, might well come later. The weakness and the dangers inherent in the system might be better stated when we had seen the system at work in its full strength and security.

The first question, then, to which I would draw

your attention, is that of the succession. In a constitutional monarchy, such as our own, which is but by courtesy a monarchy, where monarchy is but one of several institutions, theoretically co-ordinate, but in fact with one—in our own case, the aristocracy—dominant, and the others subordinate; in such a monarchy the succession is comparatively unimportant, and may be settled as it is with us, on the strict hereditary principle. And whatever the result of that principle, whoever occupies the throne, there is no real danger to the system: for the government resides, not in the monarch, but in the institutions as a whole.

But the case is different with a monarchy proper, where the sovereign is actually the centre of government, from which all action proceeds. There it is of supreme importance what principle you adopt in regulating the succession. And it seems to me a fair conclusion from historical experience, to say that in such a monarchy, the strict observance of the hereditary principle is inapplicable — that some modification of it is necessary. It has been felt to be so in the two great states of Eastern Europe which are really absolute monarchies. Neither the Czar of Russia nor the Emperor of Austria are the rightful tenants of their respective thrones on our principle of succession. The modification adopted in those two cases is, that the successor has been chosen within the limits of the

reigning family. Now, the Roman Empire was, to the full as much as either of the two mentioned, an absolute monarchy, and as such required the gravest attention to the question of the succession. He who was to have resting upon his shoulders the burden of that empire, with its two great tasks, of upholding civilization against barbarism, and of organizing the civilized world, should evidently unite a variety of qualities. He should be, as Tacitus says of Tiberius, tried in war, for so would he be respected by the enemies of Rome, and capable of controlling her defenders, the thirty legions that guarded her frontiers. He should, at the same time, have a mind capable of embracing all the details of civil administration. I should add to this, that he should be of ripe age, in the prime and vigour of life; or, if not exactly that, at any rate that the error should not be on the side of youth. If, lastly, it had been made requisite that he should have filled subordinate stations, on the sound principle that it is impossible for one who has not been ruled himself to rule others well, then all would have been done that could be done to secure a succession of adequate governors. Neither Caligula nor Nero, Commodus, Caracalla, Elagabalus, nor Gallienus, would have been emperors. But leaving out of view these two rules of exclusion, and looking at the positive qualities required, still the question occurs, in whom should the

selection be vested. There might be many, and the period before us will show that on different occasions there were many, at one and the same time, competent to rule, whether as generals or statesmen. Amidst conflicting claims who should decide? I would take my answer from the traditions of the monarchy. Julius Cæsar had adopted his successor. Augustus, himself without a son, had grouped around him and adopted into the family of the Cæsars, his son-in-law, his stepsons, and his grandchildren. Galba had adopted Piso, and in the speech put into his mouth by Tacitus, he states it as the true theory of the Imperial succession, that it should proceed by adoption, and not by connexion. Nerva had chosen Trajan; and though, in our imperfect records, it is not certain that Trajan actually named Hadrian to succeed him, it is scarcely doubtful that he would have named some successor, and very probably Hadrian would have been his choice. Hadrian adopted Antoninus Pius, and he in turn Marcus Aurelius. Hereditary succession had been then not the rule, but the exception. Such was the influence of the name of the Cæsars, that so long as one legally invested with that name survived, the allegiance of the army was certain to be given him. It was the consciousness of this that dictated the decree of the senate on the death of Caligula, that the whole Cæsarian house should be

put aside, either by death or banishment. It was under these circumstances that the hereditary principle had crept in. Again, Vespasian had left his throne to his son, but Titus had all the qualifications above given. He had commanded armies, had governed provinces, had risen by legitimate service, and was of full age. The virtues of his father and his brother had made the Roman world accept the hereditary succession of Domitian.

The answer, then, I should give is, that the reigning emperor should name his successor, with certain restrictions upon the age of that successor. Had that age been fixed at thirty-five or forty, and scarcely before that would any one, however great his genius, be competent to fill the throne of the civilized world, the gain would have been incalculable; for of the thoroughly bad emperors, scarcely one would have reigned.*

I need not now go back on the question, whether such a government,—an absolute monarchy, or rather monocracy, the government, that is, not of a series of hereditary occupants of a throne, but of a series of dictators for life, concentrating in their own single persons all civil and military power,—was or was not the best government for the Roman Empire. I gave my grounds for thinking that it was the best,

* It is not without interest to observe, that the present Emperor of France has secured this power of naming a successor should such a successor be wanted.

at the opening of the first lecture. But possibly many of my hearers, familiar with the language and traditions of constitutional monarchy, and accepting on various grounds the common statements as to its superiority, may object, that what was good and necessary at the time of the foundation of the Empire ceased to be so at a later period. They may urge, in common with very many writers on the subject, that it was an error in policy, both in the first Cæsars and their successors, that they founded no institutions by which their absolute power might gradually have been modified into a more constitutional one.

I differ wholly from this opinion. I think that, under the conditions of the Roman Empire, its political organization was based on a correct view of its wants. I may go further—and I do so in the hope of drawing your attention to this problem of government—I may add, that not merely the Roman Empire, but that every large political society—every society in which we find aggregated many smaller ones, of sufficient size themselves to be independent societies—to make my meaning clear, all such states as the larger kingdoms of modern Europe, with no exception as to our own country, are not fit subjects for the constitutional system. That system, with its fictions and its indirect action, may offer advantages at certain times—as, historically, it has done with us

—but, on the whole, I think it alien to good government. It has ever failed,—and I appeal to the history of England in support of my assertion, and not merely to the present disgraceful state of our government, though that is so much in accordance with past history as to exonerate, in a measure, the men at the expense of the system ;— it is failing you now, in the presence of real dangers and war. It is of more than doubtful advantage in peace. The people of this country must have felt of late that it is not a system of checks, with the ultimate irresponsibility that is its result, but a vigorous unity of administration, that is required for the right conduct of a war. The poor of this country feel the effects, though they may not be aware of the cause, of the want of a vigorous central executive—of a government, in short, in the place of parliamentary no-government. It may be long before the necessity of so great political change is acknowledged, but it is, at any rate, a possibility that it should be again acknowledged as it has been ; and it would be desirable, that the atmosphere of political discussion should be free enough to admit of such questions being agitated, which, speaking generally, is hardly the case. For myself, I heartily wish that the time were come when we were clear of the government of boards, call them a cabinet or a vestry, with all their complication of personal and local interests, and

under the government of one—a protector or dictator, if you like to call him so—the name is unimportant: the essential is, that he should be one who would rule England as she was ruled by Cromwell.

Excuse these remarks. History and politics are really inseparable; and if lectures are to be worth anything, the lecturer must speak freely. To return to the Roman Empire. As a matter of fact, its government actually was such as I have described it, and could its succession have been better regulated, its history would have been different. But we are aware, even from what we have already seen of its history, that there was no security for its succession. There is a strong tendency to the hereditary principle, and that not less in the government of empires than in the ordinary transmission of professional callings or of property. In the case of an absolute monarch, what is there to control this tendency? This brings me to a second question, distinct from that of the succession, but suggested by it, and one which bears on the whole system of the monarchy, as organized by Augustus.

The Imperial system, as set before you in my first lecture, was characterized by its great unity. I know not that ever, before or since, there has been so complete a concentration in one man of all the powers of a state; and I remarked then that the

emperor, as supreme pontiff, absorbed in himself, in addition to all his other powers, the religion of the state. This was but a continuation of the policy of the Republic; for in that, equally as under the Empire, the religion of Rome had been, as I said, a state engine, much more than a religion. But in the division of powers under the Republic, this had been less felt. In the entire unity of the Empire, the question assumed different proportions. There stood before the world, under the Imperial system, but one power, the representative of all action, spiritual and temporal, controllable so far as legal and direct control was concerned, by itself alone—by the wisdom, that is, or moderation of those in whom it was vested. The functions of what we call state and church were combined. The provinces of Cæsar and God were not kept distinct; in fact, to the Roman of the early Empire, Cæsar and God were one.

Such a power in the hands of a great emperor might be exercised for good, and with a directness and force calculated not merely to excite our admiration, but to command the acquiescence of our judgment. But such a power in the hands of an inferior man would be most dangerous; in the case of a young, undisciplined emperor, conscious only of its immensity, as Nero was, not conscious of its responsibility, but maddened simply by the very excess of his power, and stimulated by an insane

curiosity to try it to its full extent, it was productive of very evil consequences. Nor was the remedy obvious. The only practical one found had been in the dagger of the assassin, or in the decision, more rarely, of the army. The want that really existed was that of some other power by the side of that of the emperor, a spiritual power distinct from, and independent of, the temporal; which could speak to the temporal authoritatively, though with no power of compulsion; could point out omissions and deviations; which could have, in fact, controlled, by its strong influence, weak and bad emperors, and have had a powerful voice in regulating such questions as that of the succession. It was the want of some such power that was the primary and fundamental cause of the fall of the Roman Empire of the West. It was the object of the later period of that Empire, and of the centuries which followed, to evolve such a power, to give it shape and a definite existence. This object was attained in a degree by the papal system of mediæval Europe. The same object has been attained in later European history, since the decline of the papal system, though still only in a degree, by what is called the force of public opinion. It is attained in our own time, but not more perfectly, by the press, as the recognised organ of public opinion. But a press anonymous, and therefore irresponsible, and affording no guarantee for the due exercise of its power,

is but a poor substitute, take it at its best (I have no wish to undervalue its services), for a real spiritual power, based upon the belief of the nation, and speaking in accordance with that belief. Still, therefore, the want of the Roman Empire exists in modern Europe—still we want a spiritual power to control the temporal. To discuss, however, the proper constitution of such a power, is not within my province. It is within my province to point out this weak point in the imperial system; how that which apparently lent it strength, its entire unity, was a cause of ruin. It has ever been a great and difficult problem how to reconcile the co-existence of two independent powers, balancing and checking each other; it is still a great and difficult problem. As evidence of the difficulty in the past, I may quote the long struggle between the popes and the emperors. On the question of the present, I do not feel called to enter; so far as I have touched upon it above, it has been by way of illustration of what I meant. I must, with my present limits, content myself with simply suggesting the problem, and renounce any full treatment of it. On its solution depends the solution of all minor political and social difficulties. It cannot, therefore, be too often discussed, or too maturely considered.

The abrupt transition from Marcus Aurelius to Commodus is the historical fact that elicited these

remarks, as placing in a very vivid light this difficulty as to the succession. Commodus was about nineteen when the death of his father left him sole emperor. He had been the associate of that father for some time, and had enjoyed, therefore, the opportunity of learning by exercise to wield absolute power. But he was too young. No opportunities, no education could overcome this objection. Gradually, every barrier was broken down, and there was seated on the throne of Marcus Aurelius one who was declared by the voice of the senate after his death to have been more cruel than Domitian, more impure than Nero. The calamities of the reign of his father were, as I said, forgotten, and there lived only in remembrance his greatness and glory—so much so, that men spoke of him as unfortunate in this single point, that he had left behind him a son. But this feeling was of a later growth. For the moment, all acquiesced in the succession of Commodus, and the officers who had been formed under the father contributed their best exertions to support him as emperor, and to protect his empire. So, although not without some haste, he broke off the war in which the Roman armies were actually engaged, and abandoned a favourable opportunity of crushing effectually the border nations, the Marcomanni, yet, as a whole, the Roman Empire was not, in his time, unprosperous on its frontiers. The generals who commanded

there looked with sorrow on the disgraceful proceedings of the imperial court; but they remembered their emperor's youth, they remembered their allegiance to his father, and they possibly trusted that time might recover him from his worst excesses. The great evil to the state lay in the ruin of the finances by the prodigality of Commodus, and in the constant danger of a convulsion at his death. Otherwise, it was at Rome, and not in the provinces, that the evils of that degraded government were principally felt; and it was by a conspiracy within his own palace, not in consequence of any movement from without, that Commodus perished.

On his death, though not immediately, there ensued a convulsion similar to the one which followed the death of Nero. Helvius Pertinax was placed, as Galba had been, and Nerva, at a very advanced age, on the throne. The only one of the friends of M. Aurelius that had survived the cruelty of Commodus, he offered to all parts of the empire solid guarantees for good government in his past life and character; and he was joyfully accepted by all, with the exception of the Prætorian Guards, the same troops who had murdered Galba and insulted Nerva. They now murdered Pertinax, and the majesty of the Roman name, the throne of the Cæsars and the Antonines, was made the object of a shameless bargain between them and Didius Julianus.

But they had in this carried too far their licence. They alone had rejoiced in the fall of Pertinax. The people, the senate, the provinces, and the armies, had alike beheld it with indignation. He to whom they had sold the empire and their faith, was an object of detestation to all, and of contempt to his patrons. And again, as on the death of Galba, the generals of the armies on the frontiers asserted their respective claims. The struggle had then been between the German and the Syrian armies. There were now three competitors, the representatives of their respective armies—the Syrian, the British, and the Illyrian—Pescennius Niger, Clodius Albinus, Septimius Severus. The struggle between Vitellius and Vespasian had been decided by the rapid advance of the Pannonian army upon Rome, for Pannonia commands Italy, and in all periods of the Roman Empire, the importance of this position was acknowledged both by Romans and barbarians. The struggle between the three generals above-named, was again very considerably influenced, if not decided, by the possession of Pannonia, which the command of the Illyrian armies placed in the hands of Severus. His first danger lay in the East; his rival there, whose merits Severus in no degree underrated, was the hope of the Roman people, and had Niger shown energy and rapidity, Albinus and Severus might have acquiesced in his rule. But he delayed,

whilst Severus acted. He was enjoying Antioch when Severus had entered Rome in the character of avenger of Pertinax. Severus could temporize and be conciliatory with Albinus, whilst he defeated Niger, and settled his dominion in the East. This done, he was ready for this second contest, though a more formidable one, from the nature of the armies of Gaul and Britain. He was brutal in his conduct to his vanquished enemies, merciless in crushing all who had favoured them, or who disliked his power, or who, without being liable to either one or the other of these objections, were from their capacity deemed dangerous. This last ground for cruelty remained after the others had been long removed. For he had unfortunately determined to leave his empire to his sons, at the instigation, according to one account, of his wife; and this made him naturally very suspicious of all who were eminent in station or ability.

But whilst we do not conceal these misdeeds and defects, we are bound to allow Septimius Severus to have been cast in a true imperial mould. The judgment of the senate may be accepted in his case. 'Either he should not have been born, or he should never have died. He should not have been born, on account of his excessive cruelty; he should not have died, because he was well nigh indispensable to the state.' It would have been fortunate for the Roman world had Marcus Aurelius imitated his pre-

decessors, more especially Hadrian, had he adopted Severus, and in committing to his charge the army and the empire to command and to govern, committed at the same time his young son to train and discipline, to adopt in turn, if worthy of adoption, to set aside, if judged incompetent. Fourteen years of wasteful extravagance, both of blood and treasure, would have been spared, to say nothing of the sad spectacle of three Roman Emperors murdered, and the Empire torn by the conflict between three great rivals. Severus himself would then have ascended the throne free from the stain of cruelty, unopposed, and therefore not over jealous of his authority. The war broken off by Commodus might have been carried on to a successful issue; and, not the least of the advantages of such an adoption, there would have rested on Severus, when, after thirty years of successful administration, he had to hand over the empire to his successor, an obligation, which he could hardly have disputed, not to place his own sons on the throne, but to place there the son of Antoninus, or a worthier, if worthier in his judgment there were. It has been supposed, though I know not that our historical documents sufficiently bear out the supposition, that Severus felt this; that he felt that M. Aurelius should have adopted him. But his high regard for that emperor made him unswerving in his fidelity to his son; and not till the death of Commodus,

did he assert whatever claim he may have conceived himself to have had. When, as emperor, he reviewed his past life, his rise to power, and the difficulties which had beset him, he may well, I think, have regretted that this adoption had not taken place. The expression attributed to him, more decorous in form, though identical in substance, with that of one of our own statesmen, 'I have been everything, and there is nothing that is worth the effort,' seems that of a man who had long desired certain objects, had brooded over them, and at last attained them, but who had attained them by sacrifices of which no distance could diminish the magnitude, and which the objects when attained hardly compensated. But it might have been different had they been attained, not without effort, indeed, but without these costly moral sacrifices.

In any case, Severus was one worthy of the throne of Trajan. For eighteen years he ruled the Roman world with admirable energy, restoring its finances, remodelling its government, or at least powerfully modifying its spirit, controlling its armies, checking with a firm hand all abuses in its provincial administration, and redeeming, by the wise exercise of every imperial function, all that was censurable in the way by which he had risen. But this stern and fiery African, who spoke Punic more readily than Latin, committed the same fault as had been committed by the gentle and philosophic M. Aurelius.

He was quick-eyed in discerning merit, and always ready to promote it; but whilst he thus filled with admirable officers subordinate stations, he suffered his feelings as a father, or as a husband, to guide him in filling the highest; and, in spite of the experience of the past, he left the empire as an hereditary possession to his sons. His latest words testify, I think, to some misgivings in his mind. 'I found the state everywhere troubled,' he said, 'I leave it at peace, even in Britain. Old and lame, I leave to my sons, my two Antonines, an empire which will be firm in their hands if they shall be wise; weak, if they govern badly.' He left immense treasures, a disciplined and victorious army, the barbarians on the frontier everywhere inclined to respect the Roman name, which he had so successfully asserted, able administrators at home; but he left them all to Caracalla and Geta, sons of the Syrian wife whom his belief in astrology had led him to select. It was more than usually incumbent on Severus to have acted differently as to the succession; for, as I said before, he had greatly modified the character of the Imperial government. That government had always ultimately rested on the army. The deep policy of Augustus had not been able, the cautious statesmanship of Tiberius had not been willing, to conceal this. The courteous treatment of the senate by the Antonines had not altered this fact. Still, before Severus, all the

greater emperors had carefully studied, in their language as in their acts, to leave the position of the senate as important as was compatible with their own autocracy. Severus threw aside these traditions, and made the monarchy, both in form and substance, more purely military than it had ever been before. He was led to this by a variety of causes. In some measure, no doubt, his natural temperament influenced him. More eastern than western, sympathising better with Egypt, which he visited with great interest, and with the oriental turn of thought, whether in the Jew or the Syrian, than with the associations of the senate and people of Rome, or the spirit of Gaul and Spain; in political matters, also, he turned more readily to Eastern despotism than to the fictions of the Roman aristocracy. Again, his long military training would have strengthened this his bias, and made him little cautious how he set aside an assembly, which was more powerful for speech than action. And lastly, if he questioned his own experience, and revolved the scenes that had occurred at Rome, and the bearing of the Roman senate, its dislike of himself personally can only have been one element in the judgment he may have formed of that assembly. For he had seen that, trained to more action, and carefully treated, as it had been by the Antonines, it had had no power whatever to check Commodus in his career of tyranny; had been

his helpless victim and flatterer whilst alive, had exulted with almost an unseemly exultation over him when dead; had greeted Pertinax with acclamations, but had lent him no support; had bent to Julianus in his turn; and, when three generals were competing for the empire, had been so little clear-sighted as to their personal qualities, and the probabilities in their favour, as to show openly its preference for the two unsuccessful candidates. Under the existing conditions of the Roman Empire, Severus was right in thus modifying the imperial power, and disregarding the shadow of a great name, the senate of Rome. Under these conditions there needed but a great general, with all that is involved in that title, and a council of administration, and this he found in the eminent lawyers whom he gathered around him. There needed, in fact, a careful administration of the finances, a careful husbanding of the resources of the empire, to maintain in full efficiency the army; and there needed a good system of law as between man and man. For both these objects Severus provided, the first only temporarily, for his successors were wasteful tyrants; for the second, he laboured in his time, as all his predecessors had in theirs, and as his successors continued to labour, in building up the great fabric of the Roman jurisprudence. But these objects provided for, there needed not an assembly such as the senate. Its

action would have been prejudicial, and if condemned to *inaction*, Severus was not likely to show it respect. He set it aside, therefore, and by the undisguised display of military power, he made it quite clear that he considered its power and its authority at an end.

But then, if on this point I justify his conduct, it follows, from the grounds on which I justify it, that of all men Severus should have been most careful in selecting a successor. A great military monarchy in the hands of an incompetent emperor, is an absurdity; and Severus could have had no guarantee for the competence of either of the sons to whom conjointly he left his power. And with his reign, which closes the second, and opens the third, century of the Christian era, we take our leave for a long period of anything like a great emperor.

The fifty-seven years that follow, from the death of Severus to that of Gallienus, I shall pass rapidly over, attempting no details, but selecting such points as may be of general interest. Of the emperors that followed one another in rapid succession, some, from the shortness of their reign and the scantiness of our documents, are but pale shapes; others are distinct enough in the vividness of their portraiture, so vivid, that it may lead us to suspect a caricature, whilst we are unable to restore the real likeness. I shall content myself with enu-

merating them, and giving such points as I think characteristic of the person or the time, and then pass on to one or two more general remarks on the period they occupy, these fifty-seven years.

First in the series we have Caracalla, more properly called Antoninus, the murderer of his brother, exaggerating all the peculiarities of his father's peculiar temperament. More eastern, more antipathetic to Rome than Severus, we see him flaunting in the face of the Roman people and the gods of Rome, his African partiality for Hannibal, the great enemy of that people and those gods; we see him with his head bent on his left shoulder, in avowed imitation of Alexander the Great; we see him selecting in Roman history, as the objects of his admiration, Sulla and Tiberius, Sulla, the great scourge of the popular, Tiberius, the scourge of the aristocratical, party. Yet this wild tyrant, granting that he is rightly painted, who is distinguished from his predecessors, Caligula and Nero, Domitian and Commodus, by his making the provinces, and not merely Rome, the scene of his cruelty, is yet known in history by his having put the finishing stroke to the hitherto incomplete incorporation of the world. It was in the name of Caracalla that the decree issued which admitted within the pale of Roman citizenship every free man throughout the Empire. Financial motives may have contributed to this decision; but the act was quite in accordance with

the traditional imperial policy ; and the other traits I have mentioned, his admiration for Hannibal and Alexander, are not without their significance in connexion with it. The Roman emperor was emphatically the representative of civilization, past and present ; and Caracalla was but adopting, as it were, the glories of his predecessors. In another point, too, he showed himself capable of appreciating his father's conduct and instructions. He saw the immense importance of the army, he courted it by enormous liberality, and by the sounder methods of himself leading it to victory, and sharing the fare and the privations of the humblest of its soldiers.

The Moor, Macrinus, of mean extraction, with his attempted reforms, fell before the inherent respect of the soldiers for the name of Antoninus, honoured above the gods, as their cries testified. His son, known only for his beauty, passes with him. And we have the voluptuous Elagabalus, the High Priest of the Sun, also of singular beauty, welcoming every eastern superstition, but making all bow to his own, in long robes of pure silk, moving backwards through the streets of Rome before the chariot of his deity, and trampling on every feeling of the people, the senate, and the soldiers of Rome ; an Apicius on the throne, but adding to the brute gluttony of Vitellius the other vices of the most profligate of the Roman emperors, and clinging,

even in imminent danger, to his state and splendour. 'My death should be costly,' he said, 'and not without a show of luxury.' The thirteen years of Alexander Severus were a brighter period for the Empire. If he wanted the strength and vigour that the times required, he had, in compensation, many of the elements of a good ruler. But he was too young for empire, and his mother had not the tact to conceal her power, nor strength of mind to curb her avarice. She seems to have hastened her son's death. But he had, during his reign, done much to recruit the Empire, by carefully governing the provinces, by anxiously consulting the soldier's welfare, by a strict administration, by a conciliatory demeanour to all classes and all sects. Neither Eastern nor Western civilization should triumph, but all should be harmoniously combined, and the great names that had honoured both be held in equal honour. Then follows Maximin, the Thracian shepherd, half Goth, half Alan, a genuine barbarian, large-limbed and bright-eyed, rough, contemptuous, but often just. Faithful to Severus, the author of his fortunes, he hated the murderer of his son, and scornfully stood aloof from the loathsome vices of Elagabalus. Promoted by his successor, he was unfaithful to him from contempt and the sense of his popularity. He was the first mere soldier emperor, who had learnt of Severus no lesson so faithfully as the policy of being cruel; avoiding

all nobles, from a touchy consciousness of his own ignoble origin; but after all allowances are made for the vanity of his own account, a great and successful general, dreaded by his soldiers, and respected by the enemies of Rome, nay, even more than respected, for, as one of themselves, they looked on him with pride. He was, however, the object of hatred throughout the Roman Empire, and he perished with his son, the beautiful but insolent younger Maximin, in consequence of that general hatred.—The Gordians, father and son, of immense wealth, and equal luxury,—Balbinus and Pupienus, the emperors of the senate's choice, unpopular with the soldiery as such, and made more so by the foolish boasting of that body.—The third Gordian, grandson of the first, the choice of the Roman people, whose affection, proverbially of ill omen, was not successful in this case—a boy, with a boy's faults and a boy's repentance.—The Arabian Philip, the son of some robber chieftain, born at Bosrah, not improbably a Christian, with true Eastern craft of character, whose reign was remarkable for the celebration, with great magnificence, of the Secular Games in commemoration of the 1000th anniversary of the city.—Decius, not unworthy of his high name, but fatally marked in history for his persecution of the Christians, and for the first struggle with the Goths, in which his son and he lost their lives, the one by treachery, the other

fighting.—Gallus and his son Volusianus, the first Roman emperor who paid tribute to the barbarians, thinking no price too dear for empire.—Æmilianus, a Moor, who was murdered by his soldiers to prevent a civil war, when they heard of the nomination of Valerian.—Valerian had been named censor by Decius, as by the unanimous voice of all most fitted for that office, if re-established; but as emperor, the accounts are unfavourable to him. He was defeated by the Persian king, and he died in captivity. He was judged, therefore, it may be said, by the event; yet he possessed manifestly one imperial qualification, and the possession of such a qualification throws a doubt on the accuracy of our accounts. He had a sound judgment in the selection of his officers, most of whom were subsequently raised by their armies to the throne, though not accepted by the Roman world, and therefore bearing the name of tyrant.—Last in this chequered series comes Gallienus, the son and colleague of Valerian, Epicurean in his indifference, who treated with equal levity the captivity of his father, and the loss, one by one, of his provinces, yet who, when roused to action, was capable of exhibiting an impetuous and reckless valour. But this was but at rare intervals, and his scandalous neglect of his duties had nearly ruined the Empire; for the danger from without was daily increasing, and the misgovernment within made its increase doubly formidable.

But the emperor only plunged the deeper in his revelry, as though he would enjoy to the full, and leave the consequences to his successors.

This simple and rapid enumeration of the successive emperors might alone suffice to give some impression of the period. If we wished language to characterize it faithfully, we might recal a page of the earlier history of the Empire, and borrow from the opening chapters of the histories of Tacitus. For it, too, is a period rich in vicissitudes, marked with great losses, both internal and external. But without pursuing this, I would call your attention to one or two points, and leave them for your consideration, any lengthened treatment being out of my power. First, in regard to the internal organization of the Empire, there is the decree I mentioned as issued by Caracalla, which admitted all free men to the citizenship of Rome; and the time with which we have been dealing, shows, by the names and origin of its emperors, that this incorporation, so completed, was not a mere name; for from all provinces, Syria, Mauritania, Arabia, Illyricum, we have men chosen emperors, with no prerogative attaching to Rome, rather to the exclusion of Rome. And the same remark is true of the great officers, civil and military, especially the latter. A decree of Gallienus excluded all senators from military command.

Secondly. It is worthy of remark how completely,

even in this period, when so many unworthy princes filled the throne, all classes alike acquiesced in the imperial government, how absolutely dead were all other ideas, such as those connected with the Republic. In hatred of one tyrant, the senate on one occasion acted, but it did not act for itself; it was foolishly exultant, simply because it had had an opportunity of electing an emperor. On a second occasion, when, in the hour of danger, its members showed some memory of what they once had been, Gallienus, as I have said, decreed that, for the future, they should not bear arms; and we hear of no murmurs at the decree. In fact, the more gloomy the state of affairs, the more was it felt that the unity of the imperial government was the true rallying point for all. And it was, I should suppose, the instinct of this, that, even under an unworthy emperor like Gallienus, made all cling to him, monstrous as they felt his negligence to be. In all provinces, men were elected emperors by their soldiers, who were in every respect his superiors—such as Postumus, the defender of Gaul; Piso, of the most spotless purity; Saloninus, and Odenathus. Yet, though the Roman historians speak of them as sent from heaven to assert the Roman name, they were all treated as usurpers, and Gallienus as the true emperor, so important was it, at all hazards, not to endanger this principle.

Another point that I would have been glad to dis-

cuss is the character and attitude of the army ; but warned by the time, I will leave you to gather an impression of this both from what I have already said and from what remains of the history, and pass on to that history. Sufficient if I here say, that I consider the part that body took in the conduct of affairs to have been in general unjustly estimated ; that for its interference, when such interference was an evil, the incompetence of its generals or the emperor was really responsible ; that its general bearing was good, and its services invaluable.

With the death of Gallienus the scene changes. It was said that in death he had nominated as his successor Claudius, one whom he is well known, from a letter yet extant, to have valued, feared, and courted, whilst alive. Be this as it may, Claudius was accepted cheerfully by the army, which felt the need of an abler head ; for the soldiery, not inattentive to what had been going on, had taken thought, and had come to the conclusion, that either the Empire must sink or they must consult for its interests. And the series of emperors on which we now enter is the best justification for their direct interference, the best proof that they understood the times, and could judge of the men qualified to meet them. If the long period of trouble and indiscipline, which we have just reviewed, left traces behind ; if the soldiers did not always consistently support the emperor of their choice, such a result was to be expected. But

gradually all traces of this evil disappeared, and for a long period the Empire found in its army obedience to the emperor, and faithful service to the state. And if from the army which chose we turn to the princes chosen, and survey their various capacities and achievements, we cannot, I think, refuse some admiration to the vigour of a system which could throw up, in its decline, such a succession of great men.

They are of a different stamp, it is true, from those that passed before us in my last lecture. They are of the school of Severus rather than of Cæsar. They are the energetic military chieftains rather than the polished statesmen. They are northern and Illyrian, not southern,—Gaulish, Italian, Spanish, or African; yet, after all differences, there is sufficient of a common ground. They were called to a different lot, they were thrown upon different times, yet was their bearing and their government such, that they in no degree jar with the associations of their position.

They were called to a different lot, I said. The high majesty of the imperial name had been lowered by the unworthy men who had held it; its security had been impaired by the rapid changes which had resulted from caprice in the soldiery, or incompetence in the chief. The strength and fortune of the Cæsars and the Antonines were no part of the inheritance that devolved on the successors of Gallienus.

Yet, in the words of Napier, 'The austerer glory of suffering remained, and with a firm heart they accepted this gift of a severe fate.' The tenure of the throne was uncertain and dangerous. Successful or unsuccessful, they seemed equally doomed to pass rapidly away. But the Empire of which they had been the soldiers required the hand and the head of the general and the ruler; and as one fell in battle or by treachery, another stepped into his place with a devotion such as we honour in the veterans of Hannibal or the soldiers of Inkermann. And if the emperor fell, the Empire rose. It passed from its state of degradation and weakness again to glory and power. There was a waste of the instruments, but the cause triumphed. And though wasted, the instruments were not undervalued. The great honour they deserved has not been wholly withheld from them. 'If glory be a distinction, for such men death is no leveller.'

The choice of Valerian, the object of the respect of Gallienus, Claudius found the Empire shaken to its very base by that emperor, with pretenders occupying its finest provinces, with a rival at Milan, with the Gothic tribes imminent. He defeated his rival at Milan, but accepted for a time the remaining pretenders. 'It was a personal question as between them and himself,' he said, 'and that might wait.' A man sparing, and just, and capable, he arrested with a strong hand the course of disaster.

Perfectly alive to his danger, and the wants under which his army was suffering, he met the Goths, estimated at more than 300,000 men, with the calm courage which the consciousness of his own ability and the greatness of his cause justified; and the victories he gained well earned for him the surname of 'the Gothic,' and secured, for a long period, the Empire against those tribes. In his last illness, he named Aurelian as his successor, and the act was not the least eminent of his services.

Aurelian, too, had been distinguished by Valerian, appointed to offices, and exercised in commands. He had received from him public thanks, and had, at his instigation, been adopted by Ulpius Crinitus, his superior officer. He had been the terror of the enemies, and the admiration of the soldiers, of Rome; for he stood ever ready with his hand upon his sword to chastise the former, to lead to victory the latter. Of a vehement spirit, and too prone to cruelty, a free liver, yet with a command over his passions, of exceeding rigour in discipline, and most prompt in action, he cleared his dominions first of their invaders, then of those who disturbed the unity of government, whilst they lent it an ambiguous support. The Emperor of Gaul, the last of several able governors of those western provinces, bowed to the genius of Aurelian, and was content to administer under him a province of Italy. His dominions, of course, were reunited to the Empire

from which the weakness of former emperors had driven them, in self-defence, to separate. But even whilst renouncing for a season their allegiance to the emperor in Italy, they had not the faintest idea of renouncing their position as integral members of the Roman or civilized world; and they may have seen without regret, that the time was come for their more formal reunion, and accepted with satisfaction, in compensation for their independence, their former advantages, which the recruited strength of the imperial government once again assured them. The Eastern queen, Zenobia, who from Palmyra ruled over the adjacent deserts and Egypt with skill and vigour, was subdued, and led in triumph. Nobler than Cleopatra in her prosperity, she had not, in her defeat, the resolution of Cleopatra. On every frontier Aurelian was victorious. He restored the Roman world to its ancient boundaries, but he found it advisable, having done so, to withdraw from Dacia; it was wiser, he thought, to abandon so distant, so outlying a possession. In the full tide of honour and of victory, after five years and a half of unbroken successes, he fell by the treachery of his secretary, leaving in most points a great example—in most points, not in all; for we may acquiesce in the judgment of Diocletian, no bad judge of the qualifications for empire. He said that Aurelian was more of the general than the emperor, for that he had wanted the first gift

that should characterize an emperor, clemency. Aurelian left no successor, for his death had not enabled him to name one.

Who then should choose that successor? The army declined; for in its regret for Aurelian, it had determined that none who might be considered compromised by his death should fill his place. It bade the senate choose, in a letter, which is a curious illustration of the respective position of the two bodies. The senate hesitated. The army persisted. Ultimately, Tacitus was the choice of the senate, after an interregnum of seven months. He was a man of high character, but advanced in years. Mingled with the acclamations that greeted him in the senate as emperor, there came a demand that he should adopt some one, and secure for himself the great glory of a worthy choice, based not on private affection, but on judgment, an act which would be the noblest consolation to an emperor in death.

Tacitus was carried off by a military disturbance, without exercising his choice, and his brother, who foolishly wished to succeed him, was set aside by the soldiers on the mere mention of the name of Probus, put forward by the eastern army. Probus accepted with reluctance. 'It is a choice,' he said, 'bad for you and for me, soldiers, for I cannot flatter you.' 'Let him be as emperor, such as he has been as a soldier,' was the answer. And

Probus, as emperor, was eminently successful. No rival could shake his throne; and he made head everywhere against the barbarians who pressed upon the frontiers. The results attained in his six years were so great, and his confidence so high, that he reckoned on making Germany a province, and was heard to say, that soon the empire would be able to dispense with the army. This saying, however, and his constant demand on his soldiers for exertions other than war required, were the causes of the mutiny, hasty and bitterly repented, in which he fell.

Carus, who succeeded, was judged to have a place rather among the good than the bad emperors. His great fault was, that he associated his son Carinus in the Empire, and had not the nerve to cancel the act when he saw the revelry and debauchery to which Carinus gave himself. Carus died mysteriously at Ctesiphon. His son Numerianus was murdered, and Diocletian ascended the throne, and vindicated to himself the sole possession of the Empire by the defeat of Carinus, after an obstinate struggle.

By origin, Diocletian was an Illyrian peasant, of that strong breed which had now furnished, and was still to furnish, so many emperors. He had long cherished visions of empire, and when they were realized, he was found not to have fed himself with mere visions, but with the thoughts that made

him competent for its possession. He had evidently maturely weighed the state of affairs, and the new system which he initiated was the result of this deliberation. The troubled state both of the frontiers and of the interior of the provinces, as, for instance, Egypt, Africa, and Gaul; the burden of the administration, even when these troubles were quieted; the difficulties that attended the transmission of the Empire under the present conditions; the remedy for those difficulties; no one of these points had escaped this statesman, whose designs are justly said never to have been poor, never wanting in caution, though at times not over scrupulous.

He saw that the task of government required more than one man's energies, and he chose himself a colleague on whom he could rely. For his sagacity in this respect was remarkable, and gave safety to a policy, the danger of which, in other hands, was palpable. He saw, too, that what the Roman world had suffered so much from, was the absence of any precautions as to the succession. And to meet this, he chose himself, and his colleague chose at the same time, a successor. The two so chosen bore the title of Cæsar, that of Augustus was reserved for the two seniors. The younger rulers were to take the more active part, were to be bound to their seniors by the tie of adoption, were to be sons as well as colleagues, and

when death or voluntary retirement should remove the elder, the younger were in turn to select men who should stand to them in the same relation, should diminish the burden and increase the dignity of their position. So should a series of princes be trained up in arms and in government; so should all haste and all unseemly intrusion be excluded from the succession of the Empire; and there should be secured for its administration and defence an admirable combination of the vigour of youth with the experience of age.

Such was the policy of Diocletian, and the conception is one not unworthy of him. It is the highest element in his just reputation, that by his personal influence he was able to keep his system in efficiency so long as he chose himself to superintend its working. He placed himself in the East, and thence guided his colleague and directed his subordinates. The Illyrian peasant assumed the state of an Eastern monarch, the diadem and the flowing robe; he allowed himself to be treated by his subjects as an Eastern despot by his slaves; he allowed himself also to be worshipped as God; but he preserved in the midst of these honours his strong peasant sense; he was the parent, not the tyrant; he made it evident that it was from policy, not from intoxication, that he so acted; and that with such an emperor, the names

and titles which he affected, were but of little moment in comparison with the reality.

The more thoroughly to secure his policy, he determined on a voluntary retirement; and on one and the same day, the Roman world saw, at Milan and Nicomedia, two emperors of yet unbroken vigour, the one with his will fully consenting, the other under the influence of his colleague, strip themselves of the imperial purple, and retire to the station from which they had risen. The mind of Diocletian was strong enough to keep him steady in his purpose, and satisfied with his palace and garden at Salona. Maximian was restless without power, resumed it, and died dishonoured.

The ruling mind withdrawn, the system fell to pieces, and that rapidly. In the choice of the new Cæsars, Galerius consulted more his own inclinations than the interests of the empire, rudely rejecting the remonstrances of his adopted father, Diocletian, and the consequence was, that for many years that empire was torn by war. There were at first four, then six emperors, then again two, as death, violent or natural, removed the others; then a struggle between these two, ended by an alliance and a partition. It was an alliance and a partition such as that between Augustus and Antonius, and it ended similarly, after about an equal duration. Such a notice of nineteen years may seem unsatis-

factory, but to make clear in a lecture the vicissitudes and various combinations that occurred during these years would be a hopeless, and, even if not hopeless, an unprofitable task. Suffice it that the elaborate policy of Diocletian broke down, and that by superior ability as a general, and the strength he derived from the sympathies of the Christians, the power divided among so many was once again concentrated in Constantine. He found it easy to obtain a pretext for removing from his path every obstacle to his own single supremacy. At this point I leave him for the present, his policy when supreme may form a fitting opening for my next lecture.

Thus, for another 144 years have we traced the fortunes of the Roman Empire. The impression produced must, I think, be different from that which the last period left. We feel that the constitution has been shaken, that the frame has been subject to severe pressure from without, and that the energy required and actually found to bear up against this pressure, and to repair the shake, is necessarily exhaustive. The sense of insecurity and of decay presses upon us, and we anxiously revolve the grave question, Are there elements within of sufficient strength, under wise management, to overcome the danger from the barbarians, and to shake off by healthy action the progress of disease? This is the

question for us; but the Roman statesmen of the period do not seem to have entertained such anxiety. We may see, as they saw, the outward majesty of the empire yet intact; we can see, they did not, the weakness sheltered under that imposing exterior. They looked, as we cannot, with contempt on her barbarian enemies; they yet felt, what we cannot feel, an unwavering confidence in the power and in the destiny of Rome.

LECTURE III.

FROM CONSTANTINE TO THEODOSIUS I.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

A.D. 330 ...	A.U.C. 1083 ...	Dedication of Constantinople.	
„ 337 ...	„ 1090 ...	{ Constantine II., Constantius II., Constans.	
„ 350 ...	„ 1103 ...	Constantius sole Emperor.	
„ 351 ...	„ 1104 ...	Battle of Mursa.	
„ 361 ...	„ 1117 ...	Julian.	
„ 363 ...	„ 1116 ...	Jovian.	
„ 364 ...	„ 1114 ...	Valentinian, Valens.	
„ 375 ...	„ 1128 ...	Valens, Gratian, Valentinian II.	
„ 376 ...	„ 1129 ...	The Huns, The Visigoths.	
„ 379 ...	„ 1132 ...	{ Gratian, Valentinian II., Theo- dosius.	
„ 390 ...	„ 1143 ...	Massacre at Thessalonica.	
„ 392 ...	„ 1145 ...	Theodosius.	
„ 395 ...	„ 1148 ...	Death of Theodosius.	

LECTURE III.

FROM CONSTANTINE TO THEODOSIUS I.

Constantine—His new city—His new policy—Organization and administration of the Empire—Division of powers—Conversion of Constantine—His sons, and the final re-union of the Empire under Constantius—Julian—His return to paganism—Valentinian and Valens—The invasion of the Goths, under pressure from the Huns—The policy of the court of Constantinople—Defeat of Valens—Gratian—His choice of Theodosius—Character and government of Theodosius—The position of the different emperors in regard to Christianity.

IT has been universally felt that Constantine marks an era in the world's history—that his name is intimately connected with one of those critical changes in the affairs of men which, it has been said, it is the proper province of the historian to disclose. Nor is this solely on the ground of his conversion, and the consequent triumph of Christianity. In the temporal as well as in the spiritual direction of the Roman Empire, the reign of Constantine is of great importance. In both it is necessary for me to consider it, as well as in the mutual relations of the two spheres which were then established, which lasted till the close of the

Western, and throughout the long existence of the Eastern or Byzantine Empire.

On Constantine himself much has been written—more, perhaps, than on any other of the Roman emperors. This is but natural, considering the position he holds, as synchronizing with so marked a change in the fortunes of Christianity. But discussions on his personal history and character; the way in which he rose; the use he made in each case of victory; how far he was a sincere convert to the truth of Christianity, or how far he merely adopted it from policy;—all such discussions can find no place here. It is with the great results, the striking features of history, that I am alone concerned; and I must presume the details which form its substratum to be already sufficiently in the possession of my hearers.

The life of Constantine, before he attained sole power, had been eventful and instructive. An Illyrian by birth, he had been trained in the court of Diocletian, and so familiarized early with the Eastern Empire, whilst his father ruled in the West. On his accession to imperial rank, as one of the co-ordinate authorities among which the peculiar policy of Diocletian divided the supreme power, he had found himself in a position of great difficulty, from the jealousy of some of his colleagues, the ambition of all. I have already stated that all obstacles were surmounted, and after long years of the valuable

discipline of contest and of danger, he was at length established in undisputed supremacy, without any outward check or control. After a longer struggle than Severus had had, he was placed in the same position as Severus. He had with Severus to repair the past, the melancholy waste of the struggle, and to modify, if need were, for the future, the government of the Empire. He had enjoyed ample opportunities of observing its state and its wants, its weaknesses within, its dangers from without. Throwing aside in its principal feature the system of Diocletian, as was indeed necessary with his experience of it, he again concentrated in his single person the whole powers of the Empire, and re-established, for a time at least, unity. Then, after revolving in his mind the later history, he perceived that the problem of its defence was, in some degree, changed. The danger was not so much on the frontier of the Rhine as on those of the Euphrates and the Danube. It was no longer the Parthian that was to be feared, but the Persian, the successor of the Parthian. It was no longer the German; but the Goth and the tribes in the rear of the Goth, the Scythian and the Hun.

Diocletian had equally seen this, and as the presiding genius of his system, had stationed himself in the eastern portion of the empire, choosing Nicomedia in Bithynia as his capital. More far-sighted than his predecessor, Constantine chose the

ancient Byzantium as the site of his new capital, and the wisdom of his choice has never been disputed. For a long period, the tendency of events had been to shake the supremacy so long enjoyed by Rome. The extension of the political city to the civilized world had made the city itself, in its strict acceptation, necessarily of less importance; and the decline of its prestige may not unaptly be illustrated by the remark of one of its historians, who, when mentioning the secular games in the time of Philip, adds, that the 1100th anniversary passed without notice, to such an extent, from day to day, did the attention paid to the Eternal City diminish. Even in Italy itself, the seat of government had of late been, not Rome but Milan; and, as time passed on, the course of events carried that seat still further to the westward, and made it, now Paris, now Treves, now Arles. Independent, too, of all considerations of defence of the frontier, the change of religion would determine Constantine to seek another capital. Rome was too intimately bound up with all the associations of the religion under which she had grown and conquered, not to make the introduction of Christianity, as the religion of the state, more difficult there than in almost any other city. Long after its triumph had been definitively secured, the senate of Rome, meeting as it did in the presence of the goddess of victory, clung tenaciously to the old religion, and sent repeated petitions to

the reigning emperor, that he would not sanction its expulsion from that, its chosen sanctuary.

On the site, then, of the ancient Byzantium, in a position singularly favoured by nature, Constantine erected his new Rome, which, however, as in justice it should, has ever borne the name of its founder. To enrich, to strengthen, and to beautify it, he lavished all the resources of the empire. Egypt was set apart for the sustenance of its poor, leaving Africa for the supply of the mother city. Adopting in most subordinate points the views of Diocletian, he set himself systematically to organize his government and court. That court was, as Diocletian's had been, eastern in its character rather than western; the ceremonial and bearing of the monarch were rather those of the great king than of his Roman predecessors, Augustus, Trajan, or Severus. In robes of silk and gold, with the diadem on his head, the emperor presented a strange contrast with the simplicity of the founder of the monarchy. But that such a system should have been adopted by the sagacious Diocletian, in conformity solely with his judgment, not with his tastes, and should have been continued and matured by Constantine, might make us ready to believe that there were deep reasons to justify it. Those reasons must have lain in the character of the Eastern populations; and its adoption to suit those populations by such statesmen marks very emphatically how dissimilar, after all

attempts to unite them, were at bottom the East and the West ; how certainly, at one time or other, a disruption must take place.

The organization of the court corresponded with the personal state assumed by the monarch. It was in the highest degree elaborate, with body guards, foot and horse, with chamberlains, treasurers, and eunuchs. Nor was the system of the imperial government less elaborate. It was a hierarchy of orders and degrees, with titles to mark each different one, and appellations as high sounding and as empty as can be found in any court almanack of the present day. One peculiarity of the system deserves careful attention. In earlier times it had been a distinguishing feature of Roman policy, that it had entrusted to its officers the most extensive powers. There was no check upon them during their office, nothing which by fettering them could be an excuse for the non-performance of their duty; nor was there any provision against the abuse of their power. It was after its expiration, only, that they could be called to account; and in this lay what is called their responsibility. At the head of his army, and in the command of his province, a Roman proconsul was practically absolute. So it had been under the Republic, and the power had been fearfully abused; for the after check was wanting, the senate of Rome screened its offending members. It had been so under the Empire, but

there was then the emperor ever ready to interfere, to recal and to punish an offender; and it was his interest not to screen, but to detect misgovernment. The government of the provinces had, under this system, been in the main good, and satisfactory to the provincials. But in the large powers the system gave, there lurked a danger, if not to the provincials, yet to the emperor. In a distant province, at the head of a large army, waging a successful war, and hence conscious of strength, that army, too, daily more and more recruited from the populations on the border, who, as soldiers, attached a much more definite idea to the able leader they knew and followed into the field, than to their distant and unknown emperor, if that emperor was considered as weak, what was there to prevent officers in this position from shaking off the nominal yoke, and procuring from their army their own nomination in his stead?

Such had been the constantly recurring evil of the last century, most evident under the reign of Gallienus, but existing even under such an emperor as Probus. Such had been the evil which Diocletian had sought to remedy by his system. The weakness of that system led Constantine to a different remedy, and on the whole a successful one. This was the division of powers. The great pillars of state on which the Empire had rested, the four prætorian prefects, became civil and not military

officers, responsible for the good government of their prefectures, the right management of the provinces, the due administration of justice. But the military power was taken from them, and was given to the masters-general of the cavalry and infantry, whose number varied with the varying divisions of the Empire, at one time two, at another it was eight. Under these, as the head, were organized the counts and dukes of the Empire, as under the prefects in their new functions, were ranged the civil governors, proconsuls, consulars, correctors, and presidents,

This division of powers must be viewed under two aspects. Its primary object was the security of the emperor, and the consequent avoidance of the evils with which a struggle between competitors afflicted the Empire. And the experience of the next 150 years, during which the Western Empire lasted, is favourable to it under this point of view. There were revolts, but no one of them was successful, so long as the lines of Constantine and Valentinian could furnish a successor. Other causes aided in this result, but we may allow its fair share to this part of the institutions of Constantine. But in the period before us, the internal arrangements of the Empire became more and more of secondary interest, and the other great end of its existence, the defence of civilization, became more exclusively prominent.

The splendour and order of the imperial system, in this its new stage, may have been to contemporaries more imposing than the simpler system of earlier emperors, but on the historical student it has no such effect. The 350 years through which we have passed have seen the prime vigour of the imperial constitution displayed and wasted, but when wasted to all appearance fatally in the middle of the third century, recovered by stern treatment, so that outwardly the frame bore an appearance of good health. Shaken again by internal dissension, it was submitted to the treatment of Constantine; but whatever the merit of his treatment, there was wanting the power within, and as that was wanting, the external appearance was of little moment. The splendour that veils decay is always repulsive. We feel throughout all his arrangements, that they mark more fully than any previous ones the decline of the Roman Empire, that they are a reorganization, but not a restoration. And as we are aware of the want of real strength within, we scan more anxiously the dangers from without. In presence of those dangers, when successful defence was the one great object, and the vigour requisite for that defence the one quality that should have been called out, we may well doubt the wisdom of this division of powers, of this establishment of a system of checks and balance with the impaired energy which is, we too fatally know, its natural result.

However this may be, it was in accordance with the same system that the army was remodelled. The old legion, with its perfect organization, its infantry, cavalry, artillery, and allied force, forming a *corps d'armée*, ceased to exist; and the new legion, in size more answering to an English regiment, took its place. The number of legions was largely increased, but the strength of each proportionately diminished, and by this means the concert of the army was rendered more difficult. Its numbers were raised. In the time of Augustus, 450,000 men are about the estimated total of the troops. Under the successors of Constantine, we find it estimated at 645,000.

To meet the demands which his re-organization of the Empire involved, a careful revision of the system of finance formed a part of Constantine's labours. But on this I forbear to enter: it presents many difficulties, and such interest as it has is not of the kind well suited for a lecture. I pass to the only other point that remains to be noticed before Constantine's government in temporal matters is dismissed. Whatever its merits as a system, its founder at any rate upheld successfully the Empire which he had seized and re-organized. The frontier enemies of Rome, awed into submission by his predecessors, had watched no doubt with keen interest the contests of the rival candidates, and had felt that exhaustion must be the

result, and that exhaustion was their hour. Quiet spectators, therefore, so long as the battle raged, they put themselves in motion during the reign of Constantine. The emperor took the field against the Goths on the Lower Danube; carried the war into their territory; defeated them in Sarmatia; granted them a peace on terms highly favourable to Rome; and left on the barbarians so enduring a memory of the great power that even yet remained, and of the stern chastisement they had suffered, together with a sense of the benefits that might accrue to both parties from a careful cultivation of amicable relations, that it was only a strong impulse from without that, after some considerable lapse of time, threw the Gothic tribes upon the Empire, and led them to the discovery of the inherent weakness of the power they dreaded. Safe on this frontier, he directed his attention next to that of Persia. The Persians were ravaging Mesopotamia, one of the border provinces which formed the constant subject of dispute between the two empires. In the midst of his preparations, Constantine died at Nicomedia. His body was ultimately placed in the church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople, and though he had died in the profession of Christianity, after death as in life the first Christian emperor received divine honours.

I come now to the second point, on which the conditions under which I lecture will make me very

brief. The Roman Empire had existed for three centuries and a half. Christianity was some few years younger. Only incidentally mentioned in the first century, it had formally attracted the attention of the Roman government at the commencement of the second, and had been treated as an attack on that government. This was the necessary consequence of what I have before spoken of, the union, in the person of the emperor, of the spiritual with the temporal power. Not of sufficient prominence to draw constant supervision on it, Christianity had grown in comparative silence during the rest of the second century, though occasional persecutions reveal the uneasiness it caused. At the close of that century, and the first half of the third, its position had been more favourable. It had not been without friends at the court of Commodus; and the leanings of the African and Syrian emperors were rather for it than against it. The tendency of the government at that time was towards its peaceful incorporation with the other religions existing; its reception, on terms of equality, into the general religious aggregate. Its founder had a place side by side with Abraham, Orpheus, and Apollonius, in the chapel of Alexander Severus, in whose reign this syncretist tendency was most marked. There was no consciousness awakened that but two alternatives were really open—a complete submission or a complete extir-

pation. We are in great darkness as to the spread of Christianity, but we may well imagine that the first half of the third century, with its terrible revelations of the insufficiency and degradation of the existing polytheism, with its forebodings of dissolution in regard to the civil power from misgovernment within and from the pressure of the barbarians without, was a time peculiarly favourable to its growth. In the period of the Antonines it had been possible for Romans to feel satisfaction in the established order, and, as satisfied, to look no further. From Caracalla to Gallienus such satisfaction was no longer possible, and in the break-up of the civil and religious system of the past, men would eagerly turn to seek something more enduring. It is to this feeling that we may trace the marked prevalence of astrology at that period. It is this feeling, requiring far more than astrology could offer, that would prompt men to seek the refuge and the consolation of a religious system, not involved in, but hostile to the old—not on a level with the rest, but claiming an exclusive belief, speaking a language of confident hope to which the rest were strangers, free from the absurdities and impurities which the rest could not shake off, and which, while it left them citizens of Rome, made them at the same time members of a polity, which was alone growing and vigorous when all else seemed tottering and in decay.

But its hostility to the old was too marked to allow its triumph to be worked out quite peacefully. Those Roman emperors on whom first fell the task of resisting the barbarian inroads, came in direct collision with it in the army, and sacrificing all other considerations, all other maxims of government, to what was in their eyes the one paramount object for the time, that of defending the Empire, in the plenitude of their imperial power, and without distrusting their chance of success, they determined to crush the only internal opposition they met with. Hence the persecution of Decius, but which was not confined to Decius. It was from no belief in paganism, and, strictly speaking, from no objection to Christianity as a creed, that they attacked it, but as an obstacle to their wielding in their full efficiency the weapons of defence. Trajan had viewed it as an essential hindrance to the performance of the task, which in those happier times was the prominent one, that of uniting the Empire within, and harmonizing all its differences, national, social, and religious. And, in the spirit of such times, he had dealt as mildly with it as he could. But war is a harsh teacher, and Decius, Maximian, and Galerius, found in it a real and pressing danger—a danger in the most tender point, the constitution of the army, and they treated it with the stern uncompromising energy that the case seemed to require. They dealt with the Christians

as with the ringleaders of a mutiny, with speed and without mercy. Christianity had avoided the earlier dangers of mild treatment and attempted amalgamation. It resisted no less successfully this new form of trial, and the edict of toleration which Licinius signed with Constantine may be said to mark the final act of its existence as a simply resisting power.

One alternative, then, had been tried and failed. To extirpate Christianity was impossible. The other remained. Constantine saw that the only question left was this—on what terms was the submission to be made, for some terms were yet possible? There must yet elapse a period before complete submission was necessary, though the current of events, and the logic of its growth, made that ultimately inevitable. He determined to adopt it, and by adopting, retain in his own hands the power of controlling it. As a Pagan emperor, he had been supreme both in temporal and spiritual matters. As a Christian one, he had no idea of resigning any part of this power. He would still be supreme in both, but he would be supreme over a Christian, not over a heathen Empire. The sagacity of the statesman showed him where the victory lay, and he sided with the victor. He abandoned the dead or dying Paganism, and put himself and his Empire under the shelter of the living and growing Christianity; and whether himself Christian or not, as

Emperor he reaped for himself and his successors ample advantages from this policy. The Christian church accepted with gratitude this release from its sufferings and immediate security ; and for the present was content to give in exchange an unquestioning, uncriticising submission to the civil power. It had not as yet risen to any conception of its duties in presence of that power—to any conception, in short, of the position claimed for it, and successfully claimed, by the popes of Rome, the inheritors of the episcopal power, as wielded by Ambrose and by Hilary.

The exigencies of the Empire, actual and contingent, had induced Constantine to associate with himself successively in its government his three sons and two of his nephews. He had reserved for himself the control of the whole, and the title of Augustus ; his subordinates had borne that of Cæsar. He may have thought that the tie of blood would prove stronger to promote concord than the instinct of ambition to dissolve it ; and in this belief, his system may have seemed to him a great improvement on the one adopted by Diocletian, the failure of which he himself had consummated. At his death, then, the Roman world found itself under five masters. Gaul, Spain, and Britain, obeyed Constantine ; Italy and Illyricum, Constans ; the East, Constantius. Thrace, Macedonia, and Achaia were given to Dalmatius ; Armenia, and some bor-

dering nations to Hannibalianus. The arrangement was soon simplified. A military sedition carried off the two nephews of Constantine. His eldest son fell in an ill-planned attack on his third brother, overpowered some years later, in his turn, by Magnentius. This usurper succumbed to Constantius, who, generally unsuccessful in foreign wars, was uniformly fortunate against his rivals, and once more united the empire of Constantine. But this was not without a most exhaustive struggle. In the decisive battle at Mursa, the loss on both sides was fearful ; never, says the historian, had the Roman strength been so wasted, never had the fortunes of the whole empire sustained so heavy a blow. Add to this, that, forgetful of his duty, and solely anxious, unworthily, for his own success, Constantius had secretly called in the barbarians of the frontier of the Rhine, that their invasion on the rear of his antagonist might distract his movements. It was an act of treason of the gravest criminality, and ultimately brought a well-merited punishment.

In the massacre, which had been fatal to so many of the imperial family, two brothers, Gallus and Julian, had escaped. The former of these was selected by Constantius as his representative in the East, as he found it impossible from Milan, which he had chosen as his residence, adequately to conduct the affairs of the whole Empire. But Gallus was soon removed and put to death ; and the em-

peror was compelled to place himself nearer the scene of action, to conduct in person the Persian war. Meanwhile, however, his treason above-mentioned had borne its natural fruits. Gaul was the prey of the barbarians, and the jealousy felt at court of any eminent merit or success rendered it difficult to find officers who were competent to meet this emergency. At the suggestion of the Empress Eusebia, recourse was had to Julian, then quietly pursuing his philosophic studies at Athens. This second choice was good. His studies had not made Julian unfit for empire. He successfully defended Gaul, cleared it of its invaders, and carried the war across the Rhine far into the enemy's country. Such ability alarmed Constantius, and he sought, by withdrawing his army, to cripple this second Cæsar of his nomination. But Julian was not so easy to put aside. His troops forced him, scarcely against his will, to assume the imperial purple, and fortunately, in this respect, for the Empire, a fever, heightened by his indignation, carried off Constantius, and with him all pretext for a civil war. Julian's short reign was occupied, so far as foreign affairs were concerned, with the Persian war bequeathed to him by his predecessor. He was overconfident as a general, and rashly risked his army and his person. He fell, and left the choice of a successor to the troops.

In the internal government, he showed himself a

just administrator, and anxious, so far as was possible, to husband the finances, and lessen the burden of taxation. But short as was his reign, it would not be possible for me to limit my notice of the Emperor Julian to this enumeration of his actions as a general and a ruler. Julian the Apostate has been so much discussed, been the object of so much admiration, and such vehement reprobation, and, besides, the common ground both for admiration and reprobation, possesses so much interest, that a few words must be allowed me.

In the early period, then, of the triumph of Christianity, when its prospects seemed so secure, that the reign of Constantius was occupied with the discussing of heresy, and the alternations of the struggle between the Arians and Athanasius, Julian, after conforming, both in early life and as Cæsar, to the prevailing faith, nay, even as Augustus not shaking it off, no sooner found himself sole possessor of the throne, than he announced what had long been no secret to his friends, his adherence to the older religion of the Empire. He next proceeded to bring the full weight of his imperial authority to bear on its re-establishment. If we allow that he stopped short of persecution in its worst form, he omitted no means within that limit which could further his end. It is, I think, on this issue that he must be judged. He who will candidly consider Julian's position in early life, and

even at a later period, will not condemn him harshly for his conformity. Neither, again, will the candid judge be disposed to overrate the evil of his return to paganism. For such an one will remember the associations Julian must have had with Christianity, the religion of him who had, if not instigated, at least consented, to the massacre of his family, and had hardly spared himself; a religion, too, which, in the reign of Constantius, its professors had done all they could to bring into contempt. Further, at this period, and still later, a large proportion of the educated and cultivated Romans were still heathens, a fact I need not bring evidence to support. And the reasons which satisfied such men might satisfy Julian. It was open to him, then, I conceive, whether in retirement or on the throne, to profess the religion which had only so lately been the religion of the Roman world. It was not open to him as a statesman and an emperor, with the burdens and the duties of the imperial office upon him, with the civilized world in charge to defend and govern, with every motive to clear-sightedness and forethought; it was not open to him, I say, to suffer his personal predilections and associations to mislead him, to induce him to set aside the verdict already given by the ablest of his more immediate predecessors, a verdict acquiesced in by its opponents. He himself could see that the organization of the Christian church was far

superior to that of paganism, and at that late hour could recommend its adoption. Was it too much to require of the statesman that he should also see that an organization so living could not be called into existence suddenly, that it was alien in fact to the genius of the older religion? Or if this were too much, surely he might have estimated more truly than he did the relative forces of the two antagonists; he might have shrunk from re-opening a question which had been decided, and by no hasty decision. He had read and studied the history of his predecessors, as we know, with remarkable attention and acuteness. He must have known their efforts against Christianity, and their failure. He ought to have so far accepted that failure as to allow himself, in support of the fantastic child of his imagination—for such, after all, was the paganism of Julian, a paganism modified to a very large extent by Christian ideas, a philosophic interpretation of the common polytheism, which never had the remotest chance of supplanting, even in the popular belief, that which it interpreted, much less Christianity—to have allowed himself in such a cause no weapons but those of the philosopher or the man. It is because he was blind to all this, because he risked the peace of his Empire and the safety of his throne in support of a dead cause, because he misinterpreted facts, and could not read aright the signs of the times, but allowed his philo-

sophic conceptions to obscure his intellect and make his action inconsistent ; it is on these grounds, and not on any strictly religious grounds, that I think Julian is to be condemned. And his condemnation is clear enough from this, that his foolish policy made his death, just and highly-gifted as he was, a gain to the Empire he ruled ; that on his death his officers threw off the mask he had imposed upon them ; that the successor chosen was a Christian ; and that the army which he had led into the East under the standard of heathen Rome, returned from that disastrous campaign, without any sign of reluctance, under the banner which Constantine had adopted as the sign of Rome become Christian. Nay, more, when Jovian, his successor, stated it as an objection to his assuming the Empire, that he could not, as a Christian, wish to govern heathens, the ready answer came from the troops : That they too were Christians. And yet this was the instrument, the only available instrument by which Julian could have restored Paganism. Not then as the Apostate, but as the retrograde emperor, or, as he has been called in Germany, the Romanticist, should I be inclined to stigmatize Julian.

The position in which the army was placed at the death of Julian was one from which even his military skill might have found it difficult to extricate it. His successor, Jovian, was fain to patch up an ignominious treaty, and to sacrifice even

Nisibis for a safe and speedy retreat. His main object was to anticipate all rivals. But he died before he could reach Constantinople.

On his death the officers met to deliberate on a successor. The choice ultimately fell on Valentinian, and a better could not have been made. Favourably known under preceding reigns, Valentinian had fallen into disgrace with Julian, for with manly frankness he had never concealed his belief in Christianity. As emperor, he is remarkable for his toleration. 'I am not curious in such matters,' was his language; 'I leave them to you, the clergy of the Christian church. You must settle for us soldiers. I, as emperor, have sufficient upon me in the protecting of the frontier, and in the internal administration.'

The death of Julian had encouraged the enemies of Rome, and in every part of the Empire there was great need of vigour and ability. Somewhat over stern and silent, subject to paroxysms of anger as fearful as our own Plantagenet kings, hasty and cruel, Valentinian was yet a governor such as the time needed. The Hadrian or Aurelian of the fourth century, his active mind was concentrated on his government, from the minute details of military equipment to the highest imperial functions. With a just appreciation of the state of affairs, he chose the West for his own more immediate action, and Treves for the seat of

government. There were dangers on all sides, but the most formidable one lay there. Africa, Britain, and the German frontier along the Rhine and Upper Danube, were all disturbed by the barbarians. The Lower Danube was comparatively quiet, and Valentinian knew that no very formidable danger threatened on the side of Persia. By his lieutenants he quieted Africa and Britain, whilst he waged war successfully in person with the tribes of Germany, the Alemanni, Burgundians, and Saxons. At the same time he endeavoured to secure more permanent quiet by a diligent strengthening of the frontier defences. Such exertions required an increase of taxation, and Valentinian levied with rigour what he spent entirely in the public cause, without any wastefulness for his own luxury. He died too soon for the Empire, which, during twelve years, he had governed so ably. His death was caused by one of his fits of passion, which led to the breaking of a bloodvessel. But he died with the Empire yet intact, and with the consciousness that he had preserved it so himself, and that he left it to his successors in such a state that they might keep it so, if equal, as he had been, to their duty.

His son Gratian followed him on the Western throne: his brother, Valens, survived him in the East for three years. They were years memorable in the history of the Empire and the world—years

of concession, disgrace, and defeat, never again thoroughly repaired. Panic stricken at the approach of the Hun, the Goths between the Vistula and the Danube were driven on the Roman Empire. The demand was made to Valens that he would grant the nation of the Visigoths a shelter within the Roman frontier. It was an occasion that tested the Roman government. Not unfrequently, before this time, since as far back as the reign of Marcus Aurelius, had tribes or detachments of the barbarians been received by Rome. Not to mention other emperors, Probus had settled large numbers of them, and Constantine had distributed amongst them lands on a military tenure. But the present movement differed from earlier ones. It was a nation that was seeking shelter, not a transplanting of conquered enemies. In such a case, the grant of lands and protection was a favour which would have merited and received gratitude, and whilst nominally the majesty of the Roman name extended its shield over the suppliant, the exhausted border provinces might have been recruited and strengthened, so that the Empire would have gained at least as much as it gave. It was a nation, too, of kindred blood and a common religion, seeking shelter from a common enemy, that enemy the rudest of barbarian tribes, alien to all civilization and all religion. As the last point in the case, the numbers of the suppliants made it

difficult if not dangerous to refuse them. Such was the occasion offered to Valens and his ministers in the year after the death of Valentinian, 376 A.D.

There were several lines of policy admissible. Recognising the danger of so large an admission of new settlers, the demand might have been rejected, and the Roman armies might have guarded the line of the Danube, forcing, by their refusal, the Goths either to yield to the Hun or to turn on him in despair. The policy would have been cruel, but it would have been bold and straightforward. Or the Visigoths might have been admitted on conditions securing the peace of the Empire ; their arms taken from them, and they themselves conveyed in detachments to distant provinces, where union was impossible, and their broken numbers would have ensured their peaceful acquiescence in the provision made for them.

There was a third course, and I cannot but think a wiser one, than either of the other two. When Aurelian found it necessary to resign the conquest of Trajan beyond the Danube, and to abandon the province of Dacia, he drew from it its strength, and employed it in recruiting the exhausted provinces immediately south of that river. It was a concentration of power. Since his time, those provinces had suffered largely, and needed a new infusion. The Visigoths offered the means. The Roman

Empire should have frankly accepted the opportunity. The Christian Roman should have coalesced with the Christian Goth ; should have granted this latter all that was necessary for his establishment within the frontier ; should have placed a brave and warlike nation in the vanguard of the battle, as a screen for its own exhaustion. We know from after-experience that the Visigoth, 'barbarian among Romans, Roman among barbarians,' was eminently capable of receiving Roman civilization. The work of assimilation might have begun thus early, and their incorporation would have been different in mode, though surely not less honourable, similar in its principle and results to so many earlier instances—in fact, to the whole earlier action of Rome upon the world. Under the Roman eagles, and with the advantage of Roman discipline, the great struggle between the Hun and Western Europe might have had its decision on the banks of the Pruth at the close of the fourth century, not been reserved for the plains of Chalons-sur-Marne in the middle of the fifth. I need not say with what a saving such a change would have been accompanied.

One course only ought to have been absolutely out of the question, yet that was the one taken. It was to reveal the alarm felt, and yet not to conjure the danger ; to admit the suppliants, but to admit them so as to make it clear that a refusal would have been preferred ; to grant a favour, but to clog

it with conditions which made it as little of a favour as possible ; and to have the weakness not even to carry out those conditions. The Goths entered the Roman territories, but they entered them in anger. They sacrificed everything but their arms ; and the weak government which had admitted them with their arms, forgot its weakness and goaded them into action. No provision had been made against the danger ; the valley of the Danube, Thrace, and Macedonia lay open to them. Valens would not wait for his nephew's support, but risked himself at the battle of Adrianople ; and after the lapse of 125 years, a Roman emperor fell like Decius in the contest, to the imminent danger of both empires.

By the death of Valens, the undivided government devolved on Gratian. It is true that he had a nominal colleague in his half-brother, Valentinian, the infant son of the elder Valentinian by a second wife. This young prince had been raised by his attendants to the throne, without waiting for the nomination of Gratian, and probably against his wishes ; for such an appointment could add no strength to the administration. Yet, Gratian, looking at the then state of affairs, had gracefully and wisely accepted him. Still more graceful and wise was his conduct in regard to Theodosius. He himself had a war on his hands across the Rhine. He saw, says the historian, that the Goths held Thrace and Hither Dacia as though they were

the lands of their birth; he saw that, worse evil than any Goths or Gothic tribes, the Huns and the Alans were threatening the Roman name, and he summoned to his aid from Spain, the country of Trajan and of Hadrian, one not unworthy of such countrymen, the son of one of the victims of his father's hastiness, the son of the conqueror of Britain and of Africa, the younger Theodosius. He gave him the command of Illyricum and the East, and added at the same time, most wisely, the gift of the empire. It could hardly have been refused to the successful general, had he chosen to demand it. Its free gift anticipated any such demand, and enabled Theodosius, clear at once of anxiety and suspicion, to act in the common cause with greatly increased vigour. Unfortunately, the rest of Gratian's history is not equal to this. He had, such is the judgment handed down to us, capacity for empire had he bent his mind to it. But he was over fond of sports, especially of shooting; and, like Commodus, he forgot his imperial dignity. The Roman emperor of the West was seen in the dress of some of his barbarian troops, and was known to prefer the barbarian to the Roman soldier. The ruler who excites contempt commits the most fatal of blunders, and Maximus found it easy to murder Gratian, and occupy his throne. Theodosius accepted the murderer for a time, but on a fitting occasion occurring, he avenged the cause of

him to whom he owed his dignity; and when, some years later, a similar death carried off the young Valentinian, he refused a second time to acquiesce in the crime, but at the cost of war, punished the usurper Eugenius, and vindicated for himself the sole possession of the Roman empire. The last eleven years of the period comprised within this third lecture, are entirely taken up by Theodosius, now that for the sake of completeness I have enumerated as briefly as possible the various emperors or tyrants, in the peculiar sense, who succeeded one another as his colleagues or rivals.

The conduct of Theodosius in every respect justified the choice of Gratian. He made a peace with the Persians, but it was at their request. He repulsed the Huns, and forced the Goths into submission. But he found it necessary to keep them in good humour by payments, which had too much the air of tribute not to be a sign of the decline of Rome. Such conduct was necessitated by the weakness of the army in point of number, and it was sanctioned by the example of some even of his most illustrious predecessors. And it cannot be a ground of blame for Theodosius that he accepted the necessity which disasters, for which he was not responsible, had imposed upon him. He was the last great emperor of the West, the last competent to wield the sceptre of Augustus and of Trajan, the last under whom the Roman world was once more

united. In form and in character he is said to have resembled Trajan, whilst in the simplicity of his bearing he was as alien as either of the two to ostentation or pride. He differed from Trajan in the absence of dignity in his walk. One may well conceive such a difference between the two emperors. He was a diligent student of past history, and he must have been aware of the wide interval that separated the majestic Empire of Trajan from the shattered and broken fabric which his own genius still upheld. Yet within and without, all recognised his greatness, the barbarians whom he defeated and subsidized, not less than the inhabitants of the Empire which he guarded. He died at Milan, leaving the state at peace both in the East and the West, the quiet inheritance of his two sons. Alone of the Roman emperors, he and Constantine have received from posterity the title of Great.

The reasons for this involve a further discussion of his reign and policy. Hitherto we have viewed them only under their political aspect.

With Constantine, Christianity had attained security, a footing of equality with paganism, and the advantage of having the reigning emperor among its professors. The weight of this sanction, as indicative of the advance it had made, would be increased rather than diminished, if we look, as I feel inclined to do, on its adoption by Constantine

as resulting less from the conviction of the Christian than from the judgment of the sagacious statesman. Constantius had asserted his father's position towards Christianity. He had, it is true, taken keen interest in its disputes, but had had so little idea of yielding any point of his supremacy, that he expected for the varying formulas which his ingenuity suggested, concomitant variations in the belief of his subjects. With Julian the course of triumph had been arrested apparently for a time; but the effort of expiring paganism had been so inefficient, that it only increased the lustre of success. Valentinian had tolerated Christianity without interesting himself in its discussions. Soldier of the Empire, rather than servant of the church, whilst accepting its obligations, his sound practical sense must have made him look half-contemptuously on disputes from which he abstained, quite as much from want of inclination as of leisure. With Theodosius, the faith hitherto accepted, controlled, or tolerated, became dominant, and that in its strict orthodox, not in its Arian form. And not merely did it become dominant, but persecuting. The religious duality of East and West ceased. Arianism was suppressed by the strong hand of power, and the unity of Christianity politically re-established. Its action as against paganism was thus intensified. It is for these services that the title of Great was given to Theodosius, more than for his

political ability ; and the readiness to confer it upon him was not lessened by his own dutiful, and in some respects admirable, submission to the power to which he had thus given supremacy. It rebuked his crime, and he submitted to the rebuke. And had the spiritual leaders always spoken to the temporal in the spirit in which Ambrose rebuked Theodosius, I know not that we need have looked back on the relation between the two which we may date from his reign, with the large admixture of regret which we now must necessarily feel.

This third period has been much shorter in time than my others, about half of the last ; but it has been distinguished by a greater want of unity, and its historical importance is also greater. There has been, in fact, a double series of events, running parallel, and each requiring treatment. We could not pass by the failing polity of Rome, the increasing strength of its assailants, the blow struck at its unity by their admission and victories, the greater undermining of that political unity betrayed by the large admixture of barbarian elements in its service, civil and military, nor, lastly, the great chiefs who illustrated its decline. But whilst doing justice to these subjects, we feel that the rapid stream of decay is bearing away the Empire, that vigour and ability have a more hopeless task, that the civilization is losing its exclusively Roman character, and becoming half Roman, half Teutonic. We feel that

our interest is changing, that the question of the future is becoming more absorbing as the present grows in insecurity, that it is not with the Empire in its decay, nor with the feeble powers that yet exist within that vast but hollow frame, that we have really now to deal, but with Christianity and the Christian church, the new spiritual empire, whose outlines are daily increasing in distinctness behind the ruins of the temporal, and with the young nations that are offering themselves to fill and re-invigorate the exhausted fabric. Still for me, my task lies more with the passing than with the future, at least, so far as the temporal question is concerned. I have spoken of the rise, maturity, and decline of the Roman Empire; I have yet to speak of its fall.

LECTURE IV.

FROM THE DIVISION OF THE EMPIRE TO
THE END OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

A.D. 395 ...	A.U.C. 1148 ...	Arcadius, Honorius.
” 405 ...	” 1158 ...	Invasion of Radogast.
” 410 ...	” 1163 ...	Rome taken by Alaric. His death.
” 412 ...	” 1165 ...	Adolphus in Gaul.
” 423 ...	” 1176 ...	Valentinian III.
” 429 ...	” 1182 ...	{ The Vandals, under Genseric, enter Africa.
” 439 ...	” 1192 ...	Carthage taken.
” 451 ...	” 1204 ...	{ Battle of Chalons. Defeat of Attila.
” 454 ...	” 1207 ...	Death of Aetius.
” 455 ...	” 1208 ...	Genseric plunders Rome.
” 457 ...	” 1210 ...	Majorian.
” 468 ...	” 1221 ...	War with Genseric. Ricimer.
” 472 ...	” 1225 ...	Death of Ricimer.
” 475 ...	” 1228 ...	Romulus Augustulus.
” 476 ...	” 1229 ...	{ Close of the Western Empire. Odoacer, Patrician, King.

LECTURE IV.

FROM THE DIVISION OF THE EMPIRE TO THE END OF THE EMPIRE OF THE WEST.

The internal condition of the Empire—Analysis of the population—The barbarians—Changes in their state during the imperial period—Their respect for the Empire—The Eastern Empire not part of our subject—The Emperors—The Imperial generals: Stilicho, Bonifacius, Aetius—The barbarian chiefs: Alaric, Attila, Genseric—The disruption of the Empire—Retrospect—What the Western Empire has left to subsequent times—Concluding remarks.

THE emperor, the senate, the army; the organization of the government, and its relations to the governed; the relations, also, between the temporal and the spiritual power, between the imperial government and the Christian church; lastly, the alternations of success and failure in the defence of the Empire,—all these points have in their turn come under our notice. Two great subjects are left for the opening of this my last lecture—the state of society, the internal condition of the Empire; and the enemies of Rome, the barbarous tribes on its frontiers, to speak in Roman language. They are both of them difficult in themselves, and difficult to us from defects in our knowledge. Still, some treatment is imperative, and

If, then, we proceed to analyse the population, and if we take, as in the main, I believe, we must do, Rome as the type—probably the exaggerated type—of its younger sisters Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, Carthage, Lyons, York, and Milan—we shall be led by the consideration of Rome to see that practically there is one great division; in other words, that there are only two classes with this recognised political existence. There is no part of the ground on which I feel so distrustful of my footing. Still, it does seem the conclusion to be drawn from our materials, that there was, politically speaking, an absence of a middle class, such as forms one great element of the strength of the modern social state, a class of wide extent, and with ramifications connecting it with both the extremes of society. In the absence of this class, which in fact, from its wide extent and importance, we rarely mention in the singular, but rather as the middle classes, there were two bodies opposed to one another by the broadest possible distinctions. There was the class of the rich and noble, immensely wealthy, and with pride and luxury fully equal to their wealth, few in number, but engrossing the landed property of the Empire to a most pernicious extent; as a rule, spending their wealth on their own selfish gratifications, but in individual cases displaying princely liberality. There was, over against this class, the mass of the

poor citizens, what, to use a word which has recently become more familiar to the political student, we may call the proletariat, composed of men without property and without industrial occupations, supplied by the government with bread, with bacon, with oil, with baths, and with shows, contented whilst so supplied, breaking out into acts of turbulent violence if the supply failed.

It would be a loss of time to dwell on the inherent difficulties that attend on such a system of maintaining such a population. It would be equally so to dwell on the good side of the picture. As political observers, we have just at present an opportunity of contrasting the two systems, that of the Roman Empire as reproduced in the imperial socialism of France—that of the absolute inattention on the part of the government to the wants of the governed, in this matter of supply, as instanced in the present grievous distress in the large towns of England. It seems to me that such inattention is indefensible in principle; that, subject as all industrial societies are and must be, to great fluctuations and occasional interruptions, there should be some exertion on the part of any government worthy of the name to meet these emergencies, and to break the pressure of sudden distress. But, at the same time, I believe it to be the conviction of the best authorities, that so absolute and constant a provision for a large

population, as that of the Roman governors for the people of Rome, is erroneous in principle, and carries in it the elements of its own destruction. It can only be had recourse to in a period of transition, and as a provisional measure. But in judging such features in the social state of Rome, we must remember that the Empire was arrested in its development by the attacks from without, and cut short in its existence by the barbarian conquest, and that so there are no sufficient means of estimating what would have been the policy pursued had continued peace enabled its rulers to change what was provisional, and gradually modify its system. With these remarks I must leave this subject—the analysis of the Roman polity—not dissembling the great weakness of this its social organization, much less the inadequacy of my own statement of it. There is but one other element which I would recal to your memory,—the prop and pillar of this weak system, the only guarantee for its having time to mend, the only recipient for the vigour still left in it, the only really sound element in the society, as a society, and as distinct from its political aspect, as distinct from the imperial government—the army of Rome.

From this picture of weakness, a slave population in the country, with no interest in its defence; a slave population in the towns, an element of danger and anxiety, a turbulent proletariat, and a dissolute

and luxurious nobility; lastly, from the Roman army and its generals, we turn to contemplate, equally in outline, the nations on the frontiers, and to consider their relative strength and character.

Here, again, we are placed in a difficulty, owing to our materials, especially in that point where the question is of most importance, the European frontier of the empire. For a consideration of the history of Rome during all this period will lead us to give but a comparatively slight attention to the other frontiers, the African and the Asiatic. The border tribes on the former are eminently obscure and unimportant. On the Asiatic frontier we have two great divisions: the *Arabian*, the Saracens of the desert between Syria and the Euphrates, as well as the Arabs of Arabia Proper; and secondly, the *Persian* nation. The Saracens occur in history as harassing the Romans in their eastern campaigns, or serving as auxiliaries in their armies. The Persians, since the revolution which replaced them in their ancient supremacy between the Euphrates and the Indus, had been alternately at peace or war with the Romans; but their general attitude was that of a rival and hostile power. During the whole of our period that was the only frontier where the Romans were in contact with an empire at all on a level with their own; one with which they could establish regular political relations, one which they could not hope to conquer, and which,

since the first vigour it had shown at its establishment, could entertain no serious project of conquest, of extending itself west of the Euphrates. With the Persian, not less than with the Parthian, sound policy should have dictated a firm, but conciliatory and unaggressive bearing.

It was on the European frontier that lay the real danger of Rome. It was thence that came the invasion of the barbarians, to use the language of Roman writers. This aggregate term of barbarians requires some explanation. It is of course relative. In the mouth of a genuine Greek we know its meaning; Greek and barbarian were an exhaustive division of the habitable world. In the mouth of a Roman of the early empire, I should suppose its signification to have been very analogous to this. Whatever was not within the limits of Roman civilization, was as such barbarian, and there were included under it nations at as wide a distance from one another, in regard to cultivation, as that which separated the wandering tribes of the African desert from the organized monarchy of Parthia. As time passed on, I imagine that this comprehensive use of the term ceased, and that when the Romans in the later period of the Western Empire spoke of the barbarians, they practically meant the various tribes that occupied Germany and the countries east of Germany, as far as their knowledge extended, excluding, of course, any parts of

such tribes as were within the Roman limits. The term, then, so far, was a geographical one; and, from the nature of our materials, it remains so. Roman historians were, as a rule, singularly neglectful of the nations with whom their country came in contact. Throughout their history we suffer from this neglect. But in the works of Cæsar and of Tacitus we have exceptions. The former has left us descriptions of the Germans and the Gauls; the latter dedicated a work to the study of Germany. And as the various centuries of the Roman history succeeded one another, had there been in each century writers who would have followed in the track of Cæsar and of Tacitus, and handed down to us the state of Germany and Sarmatia, as it appeared to their eyes, or as it was gathered from accounts, there would have been nothing in that case to desire. But as far as I know, from the time of Tacitus onwards we are left, so far as contemporary Roman accounts are concerned, to piece together incidental information, and to the inferences which we can draw from certain acknowledged facts. Now an attentive study of Cæsar's campaigns in Gaul will show, that the term barbarian, as applied to the Gaulish tribes, must be interpreted very carefully. It expresses, it is true, a lower social and political organization than the Roman; but it does not express a state without organization at all. The several tribes had each its own government; they

were capable of acting in concert, and of acting on a definite and well-considered plan; they could bring into the field armies formidable to the Roman legions, guided by the genius of Cæsar; they could produce, in Vercingetorix, a general who takes high rank in the list of the enemies of Rome. And, moreover, when the conquest was accomplished, they were in such a state that they could rapidly assimilate the civilization of the conqueror, and within a generation or two place themselves on a level with him. Nor, again, if we take the essay of Tacitus upon Germany, shall we form a conclusion as to the Germans very dissimilar from this.

Now, between the age of Tacitus and the final invasion of the barbarians, which broke up the Empire of the West, there intervened about 300 years. During those 300 years are we to suppose that the barbarians of Germany remained stationary? that the influences of Roman civilization were unable to penetrate them? that the contests with the Roman armies in repeated wars produced no effect on their military organization? that the interchange of commercial dealings, of which we are apt to underrate the activity in ancient times, had awoken in them no appreciation of the superiority of civilized life? lastly, that the spread, and the rapid spread, of Christianity among them had also been unable to raise them socially nearer to the position of those nations who, by the mouth of

prisoners, preached it to them? Such conclusions seem to me so inconsistent with all probability, with all fair historical analogy, that I could not accept them. Yet they are, I imagine, the conclusions hitherto acquiesced in; they are the conclusions which colour the pages of Gibbon; and they are the conclusions which direct historical evidence does not enable us satisfactorily to modify. Of course we must draw a distinction between the various tribes of invaders that conquered Rome. Those fresh from the coasts of the Baltic would be less affected by her influence than those on her borders; and the nomad tribes of central Asia, at a wholly different stage, as they were, of social development, would be still less affected. The Hun was much farther below the Visigoth or the Vandal than these latter were below the Roman. In fact, I should conceive that the real relation of the Roman to his German and Gothic conquerors was much more analogous to the relation between the Italian and the French of the close of the fifteenth century; or, I might even say, between the Italians and the Austrians of the nineteenth, than to that which exists between the French and the Cossack.

Several circumstances have combined to heighten our impressions of the barbarism of the German invaders. We group in one mass the elements, in themselves essentially distinct, of that which we term the irruption of the barbarians, and the darker

shades required for the Slavonian and Finnish tribes are allowed to colour the whole picture; not impossibly, also, the fierce ravages of the heathen nations of Scandinavia may have influenced the view taken of their Christian and comparatively civilized kinsmen; and the long terror of centuries felt by Christendom in presence of the danger from Eastern invasion may have lent vigour to the descriptive powers of the historians of an earlier conquest. But a conquest and a settlement are never very gentle processes; and the records of the fall of the Empire of the West contain many gloomy scenes of devastation. This was inevitable; and it has been invariably the same ever since, till within the most recent experience. If Africa was ravaged by the Vandals, the Palatinate was equally so by the generals of Louis XIV. Nor is there any description of the results of war on a civilized population which would far outbalance in horror the fair description of the evil inflicted on Germany by the Thirty Years' War. The true way in this, as in most questions of the kind, is to look to the brighter side of the picture, and in the comparative ease with which the Gothic and German tribes, who first conquered the Empire of the West, effected their settlement, in the politic way in which they adopted its laws, and fitted themselves into the framework of its organization, we see conclusive evidence of their advanced state of civilization.

The rule of Theodoric the Ostrogoth, at the end of the fifth century, was not unworthy of the best of Roman emperors.

This discussion over, and the principles stated on which I would judge the barbarians, I may give a counterpart to the picture I gave of the Roman Empire. Over against it there stood in threatening attitude this aggregate of barbarians, growing in numbers, in full vigour, and eager to seize the rich fruits of long-established order, and to inhabit the ancient homes of civilization; not throwing forward an army as an instrument of conquest to meet an army which was an instrument of defence, but themselves the army of conquest, seeking a national settlement for those who were both nation and army, led too by generals who were competent for their post, competent to conduct their men to victory, competent to appreciate the greatness of the organization over which they were triumphant, competent to settle within it and to adapt it to their wants. Their inferiority lay in the want of arms and discipline as soldiers, in the necessary clashing of their interests, as conquerors and settlers. There was also a strong moral barrier in the prestige of Rome, so long felt, so amply acknowledged, so successfully vindicated as it had repeatedly been, whenever a great man had, even in its weakest moments, swayed its forces. This it was which would have led them, I believe, to

accept a compromise, to take arms under its banners, and to strengthen its frontiers; this it was which made Alaric extort by compulsion the title of master-general of the armies of Illyricum; which converted Adolphus, his successor, from the inveterate enemy into the statesman favourable to Rome, and into the suitor for the hand of a Roman princess; which, lastly, led, one after another, the chiefs of the barbarians to waive their full rights of conquest, to speak of themselves rather as the guests than as the victors of the Empire, and to crave a recognition of their title from the Eastern Empire, on which had devolved the representation of the Roman name.

I turn now to the history of the eighty years that are left, the fall of the Roman Empire of the West. And at the outset, I may state that it is exclusively this empire of the West to which for the future I confine myself. A few remarks will justify this. In the sketch I gave in my first Lecture of the composition of the Roman Empire, I drew, I would remind you, a strong line of distinction between its eastern and its western portions, its Greek and its Latin constituents, taking these terms, Greek and Latin, as representatives, respectively, of the various discordant elements which lay underneath them. And as we have proceeded onwards in our review of the history and distinctive features of the Empire, I have from time to time

alluded to the permanent opposition existing between these two great constituents. The Roman system ever remained a dual one. The remark is Niebuhr's for the earlier history. It is true of the later. The incorporation within the Empire of that vast portion of the civilized world over which the conquests of Alexander and the government of his successors had spread the cultivation and language of Greece, was in fact the placing by the side of Western Europe an element which refused to assimilate with it. The division between the Greek and Roman constituents of the Empire had been the basis of the partition effected between Antonius and Augustus. It had been the basis again of a similar partition contemplated, but not effected, between Geta and Caracalla. The administrative division of Diocletian had rested on this acknowledged discrepancy between the parts of his empire. Not acknowledged in the division between the sons and nephews of Constantine, from the accident, I presume, of their number, it had reappeared under Constantius, and found a recognition equally in the appointments of Gallus and of Julian. It had guided the arrangements of Valentinian and Valens, of Gratian and Theodosius. It had been an idea, in short, which, at first accepted as the solution of a great political difficulty, had been subsequently rejected as derogatory to the greatness of the Empire. It had, however, grown upon the convictions of

statesmen, and had been slowly making its way, and against repeated checks, up to the period when it should be acknowledged as necessary at least, if not in itself desirable. That period is the death of Theodosius and the accession of his two sons, Arcadius to the throne of the Eastern, Honorius to that of the Western Empire, 395 A.D. This settlement was practically never reversed. Here, then, we may leave the Empire of the East to its long subsequent history of 1000 years. It differed in religion, and even more fatally in its religious organization, it differed in language, in national feeling, in all social respects from the West. It differed no less in its fortunes and ultimate fate. It long claimed dominion over the West as the inheritor of the traditions of Rome, and the sole survivor when all else had succumbed to the barbarians. But its claim was of no real importance, broadly speaking, even at first; it became ultimately as empty as that of the kings of England on the French crown. The tenacity with which it clung to isolated points in Italy may remind us of the similar tenacity with which England clung to Calais. It survived, preserving the language and literature of Greece with the traditions of Roman law. It survived by virtue of Constantine's selection of its capital, as the advanced guard of civilization, as the barrier against Eastern invasion. In its worst degradation it still kept some conscious-

ness of its original condition, its administration still recalled the memory of better times. It had its alternations of success and defeat, of able and incompetent emperors. It fell, and we need not regret its fall. Its conquerors were nobler than itself. But it has left in its fall a tradition that does not seem to die out, the recollections of its past greatness stimulate even now the passions of mankind. The Greek and the Russian alike look with hope, though one would have thought with hopes mutually fatal, to the restoration of the Byzantine empire—of the Kaiser of Roum.

This simplification effected, we may concentrate our attention on the Western Empire. Of its fall, I shall attempt no consecutive historical view. Certain main features are all that I can offer you. That fall is but the beginning of a period, broken and tangled beyond all others in history—the long settlement of the northern nations. We are only concerned with its first act. I placed before you two powers, two states of society, in contact one with the other as defensive and assailant—a declining and effeminate civilization in contact with a barbarism, but with a barbarism which included under it almost infinite gradations, from its noblest form in Alaric and Adolphus down to men who verged on the wild beast. If this statement were at all adequate, there would be comparative ease in dealing with the subject, although, even then, each

of the two sides in the contest would still involve points of difficulty. But whilst, in the main for purposes of clearness, I adopt this statement, I am not blind to its inadequacy, for the limits of the two bodies are not kept distinct; there has been going on long, and that upon a large scale, an admixture of one into the other, marked most definitely by this fact—that the armies of Rome are, in large measure, barbarians enlisted in the cause of civilization, and that the generals who most successfully command those armies are either themselves also barbarians, or, from circumstances, more versed in barbarian than in Roman policy, trained in the barbarian camp, familiar with their language, attaining their objects by their help, and equally ready to lead them against the court of Rome or against their own kindred tribes.

It is a time of battle and confusion, on which no contemporary records throw any systematic light. Its shifting and discordant scenes almost baffle all attempts at methodical arrangement. Yet, limiting ourselves strictly to the fall of the Roman Empire—discarding, that is, all consideration of that which was growing into life, setting aside the various barbarian kingdoms that arose out of its broken fragments, and the Christian organization that existed as the link between the dead and the living, we may find three or four points of interest; and by keeping close to them, we may possibly succeed

in evoking something like order out of the chaos. I will at once name the points I have selected :— 1st, The emperors, the nominal chiefs of the Western world ; 2ndly, Its real defenders, whether Roman or barbarian ; 3rdly, The chiefs of the assailing tribes, not in name only, but in reality, their leaders, and as such, stronger in their position than the generals of the Roman armies, who had to contend against the weakness, the impolicy, and the faithlessness of their emperors ; lastly, The gradual process of disruption, by which province after province was separated from the Empire, till the work was completed by the extinction of the imperial name, and the occupation of the throne of Italy by a barbarian king, till, in short, Romania had become Barbaria.

The first point is the easiest, and need detain us but a very short time. No purpose but chronological accuracy could induce any one to burden his memory with a list of names that represent such feeble rulers as those of this final period. Honorius and Valentinian never attained—it is immaterial whether this was the result of constitution or education—to real manhood, or to any consciousness of the functions they had to discharge. And the rest of the phantom series, with the exception of Majorian, are utterly unworthy of our notice politically. They were but emperors in name, in most cases the convenient cloak of some powerful adven-

turer. Whatever interest attaches to the reigning princes is almost entirely absorbed by Placidia, the mother, the sister, the wife of emperors, the wife also, in turn, of the Visigoth conqueror, Adolphus. Her strange fortunes may excite attention to her personal history, and throw light on the times which witnessed them, but they do not sufficiently affect the course of events to require at our hands more detailed mention.

If from these, the titular chiefs of the Empire, we turn to its real chiefs and defenders, there are three names which stand forth from the rest, during the first half of the fifth century; two others in the latter half, which, though not so eminent, yet cannot be passed over. The first three are—Stilicho, the opponent of Alaric; Bonifacius, the ally and then the opponent of the Vandal; Aetius, the leader in the war against the Hun. The two others are Ricimer and Odoacer.

Stilicho was a Vandal, trained in the service of Theodosius, and entrusted by him with the guardianship of Honorius, the Western emperor. It is extremely difficult to come to a conclusion as to his character. Was he an ambitious man, who aimed at securing for his family, if not for himself, the crown of which he had been constituted the guardian, and who scrupled little by what means he attained his object? And are the accusations true, which represent him as calling in the barba-

rians, with a view to the furtherance of these projects? Or is the language of his panegyrist, Claudian, substantially the truer, when stripped of its poetical colouring, and was he the faithful defender of his charge, and are his apparent conciliation of the enemy, and dilatoriness, only the natural results of the weakness of the Empire, and a policy dictated by the irresistible force of circumstances? We cannot answer these questions satisfactorily. The more favourable view is, at least, quite as probable as the other, and the actions of Stilicho are, in any case, an evidence for him. He repeatedly defeated Alaric, he succeeded in arresting and defeating the dangerous attack of Radogast, and by his death it was felt that Rome had lost its most capable defender, the Visigoths their most formidable enemy.

Bonifacius, count of the Domestics, and proconsul of Africa, was by birth a Roman of the province of Thrace. The friend of Augustine, he had married, when envoy at the court of the Vandals in Bœtica, his second wife, and had thus been brought into closer relations with that power. His character is represented as of the chivalrous cast. He was a Christian soldier, at once religious and of heroic bravery. He had never abandoned Placidia and her son when their fortunes seemed desperate, but the arts of Aëtius, his old companion-in-arms, and now his rival, prevailed at the court of Ravenna, and

drove Bonifacius into a hasty revolt. To secure his safety, he called in the Vandal power from Spain, and Genseric gladly seized the opportunity. Too late Bonifacius had his eyes opened to the truth; the misunderstanding between him and the imperial government was cleared up, and he vainly strove to repair his fatal error. The Vandals triumphed over his opposition, and he saw his province ravaged in all directions, and torn for ever from the Empire of the West. In the true spirit of loyal repentance, when the cause was hopeless, Bonifacius returned to render his account to his government, and to accept his punishment. Placidia wisely did not alienate any further the noblest of her servants. She received his explanations trustfully, and heaped honours upon him. He was named patrician and general-in-chief of the Roman armies. In that capacity, he met in battle Aetius, at the head of a rival force, and was mortally wounded by him in hand-to-hand fight. His last act was characteristic. Recognising in Aetius the only man left who had the requisite ability for the protection of the almost defenceless Empire, he forgot the wrongs he had himself suffered at his hands, he let himself be influenced solely by his high appreciation of the merits of his rival, and recommended him to his wife as her future husband.

On the death of Honorius, and in the absence of Valentinian III. at the court of the Eastern emperor, an occupant of the apparently vacant throne had appeared in the person of John. This pretender, aware of his weakness, had despatched Aetius to purchase the services of a large body of the Huns. At the head of 60,000 of these barbarians, Aetius was re-entering Italy, when he learnt the death of his employer and the success of Valentinian, and he waited prudently for the event, and succeeded in making terms with the court. His auxiliaries were indemnified by Placidia, and he himself named to the command in Gaul. He was by birth a Sarmatian, from the Little Scythia; he had been placed by Stilicho as a hostage with Alaric, and had remained there three years; thus becoming fully acquainted with the language, military system, disposition, and policy of the Visigoths. He had subsequently enjoyed the same means of appreciating the Huns. Such familiar knowledge of these two great divisions of the enemies of Rome gave him extraordinary advantages, either for the control of the Roman court, if he should find it expedient to secure his rise by that means, or for organizing the defence of the Empire, if his interests and ambition presented that as the preferable object. His character, a remarkable mixture of suppleness and impetuosity, of craft and daring,

bore evident traces of his Eastern origin, and enabled him to turn to the utmost profit the advantages of his education.

Personal jealousy had impelled him to attempt the destruction of Bonifacius, and when the latter had been cordially received by Placidia, the same motive led Aetius to enter Italy with his army, to crush by war the rival, against whom his arts had been unsuccessful. Beaten in battle by that rival, he was yet left really victorious by his death, and he was received by his feeble emperor as a master, and with almost imperial honours. He returned to his government of Gaul, and by the ability he showed in that government, redeemed his former conduct. Britain appealed to him for aid, but he finally abandoned all attempt at defending that province, which had been for some time independent of the Western Empire. In truth, no part of his forces was available for such an object, for the Hun was upon him; and Aetius, more than any man, would know his danger. He strained every nerve to meet it. By vigorous exertions he collected the whole force of Rome, and induced, by his earnest representations, Theodoric, the Visigoth king of Southern Gaul, to join him with his army. Orleans, at that early period, as at a later, of great historical importance from its position, was on the point of falling, when the joint army of the Roman and the Visigoth snatched it from the hand of Attila. The

Huns fell back on the Marne, and in the vast plains that surround Chalons was fought the last great battle of Rome in defence of her Empire. The Visigoth and the Roman, Theodoric and Aetius, met there Attila with his attendant kings, the generals of their respective nations. All day long the battle raged, and at nightfall its issue was still uncertain to both the combatants. The loss of life was enormous, fully proportionate to the greatness of the stake. But Attila, having tasted to the full *the joys* of that memorable fight, confessed, by his inaction the next day, that the victory was for Rome. It is a signal honour to Aetius that he connected his name with it. He fell by the hand of the master whom he had served, and he left no one to fill his place as defender of the Empire.

Ricimer the Suevian shrunk from the odium of making himself emperor; his barbarian origin seemed to him a fatal objection. When by his success against the Vandals, he had attained a commanding situation, he preferred to name successively his creatures emperors, and to enjoy the reality of government, whilst he left them its nominal possession. On his death, after some interval, the position he had held was occupied by Odoacer, who had the ability to secure the leadership of the confederate barbarians then in the service of the empire. He, too, shrunk from himself accepting the imperial title; but he grew tired of

the fiction of an emperor, and without any more definite appellation, as governor of Italy, than Patrician, he set aside his creature Augustulus, and induced the senate of Rome formally to acknowledge that the power had for ever passed from the Eternal City, that the Emperor of the East was a sufficient representative of the Roman name, and the only legitimate possessor of the imperial title and its insignia. The letter which conveyed this acknowledgment was accompanied by those insignia, and it prayed for the recognition of Odoacer as the viceroy of the imperial court of Constantinople. The act marks definitely the close of the Western Empire.

From the guardians of the Empire, Roman or barbarian, I turn to the leaders of its invaders. And there are three names which meet us, names all of them of high historical importance. Alaric the Visigoth, Genseric the Vandal, Attila the Hun. These are the great names of the invasion and destruction of the empire; those of the final settlement concern the historian of a later period.

The death of Theodosius left the Roman world without a master, and it was partly the sense of this, partly the intrigues and quarrels of its statesmen, that led to the Gothic revolt. They first turned their arms against the Eastern Empire, and, under the guidance of Alaric, ravaged Greece. Treachery made this an easy task, for the passes

were left unguarded. Driven from Greece by Stilicho, Alaric received from his nation the title of king, and from Arcadius the command of the Roman armies in Eastern Illyricum, with the title of Master-General. He availed himself of this office to arm his native troops more perfectly than they had hitherto been armed, and shortly after attacked the Western Empire. According to Alaric's own statement, he was prepared to withdraw from that attack, and to settle his nation peacefully on its eastern frontiers in Western Illyricum, but a direct invitation from Honorius retained him. It is quite evident that Alaric, like his successor Adolphus, after maturely weighing his own circumstances, and the relative position of the Visigoth nation, as regarded Rome on the one hand, and the barbarous tribes in his rear on the other, was prepared to grant easy terms where he might have exacted harder, to spare the ancient order, whose greatness he appreciated, and to settle his nation within it, so reaping the benefits of its traditional civilization, and returning for those benefits a much needed support. It required but an honourable observance of stipulations on the part of Honorius to have secured this result. But the court of Rome alternately cringed to and cheated Alaric. It made an enemy where it might have secured a friend, and, safe itself in Ravenna, it left Rome to satisfy his vengeance. Once and

again Alaric appeared before its walls, once and again he consented to retire on conditions. It was during the interval which followed on his retirement and defeat by Stilicho, that a new danger threatened Rome. The tribes on the Baltic had been roused by their king, Radogast, and, in number about 200,000, were in full march on Italy. Radogast had no such views as Alaric, he was animated solely by a burning desire for vengeance. As a pagan he breathed hostility to Christian Rome; as a German, he desired to punish her long domination. He was fortunately arrested by Stilicho, walled in by him on the barren heights of Fiesole, with Florence at his feet, taken captive, and put to death. So the main attack was frustrated, and Italy and Rome were saved. But a detachment of his immense army had broken off from him, had entered Gaul and Spain, and separated the latter province from the Empire. Radogast passed away, and his conqueror, too, and Alaric reappeared on the scene. 'It is not with my own wish that I am marching on Rome,' so he said, 'but there is an inward monitor who daily troubles me, giving me no rest, but ever repeating the injunction, *Forwards, to the destruction of the Roman state.*' He looked on it as a voice from heaven, and, at his third visit he entered Rome as a conqueror, and abandoned it to his troops to sack in the year 410 A.D. He died shortly after, in the midst of his

schemes of empire. His successor married Placidia, and settled the Visigoths, by an arrangement with the Romans, in the southern districts of Gaul.

The detachment which broke off from Radogast's army and passed into Spain was composed of Alans, Suevians, and Vandals. It was to these latter that the invitation came to invade Africa as supporters of Bonifacius. Genseric led them, plundered and settled in that province, and during his long reign of nearly fifty years was the terror of Rome, by his arms and by his policy. For whilst he cut off the supplies of corn for the people, and intercepted the rents of the senators, he ravaged with his fleets the coasts of Italy through their whole extent, was master of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica, and forty-five years after, Alaric took and plundered the city itself. The avenger had come from Carthage, though of Teutonic, not of Punic blood. Formidable in himself from his energy and fierceness, he was no less so from his politic connexion with the other great contemporary enemy of Rome, the Huns. The alliance of Genseric with Attila kept Rome in alarm both from the north and the south at once.

The Goth and the Vandal, in common with other German tribes, poured in on the Roman Empire with the design of effecting a settlement. The nomad tribe of the Huns passed as a devas-

tating torrent, with no evidence of any such intention. The King of Kings, such was Attila's style, or in the language of those who suffered from him, the Scourge of God, boasted that the grass never grew where his horse trod. Such an inroad was an evil without any compensation, and Roman and barbarian were equally interested in stopping it. It was short, but destructive. The Huns, after absorbing the Slavonian and German tribes—for the Germans, who resisted the Romans, submitted to the Hun, and followed in his train—and embodying the Ostrogoths with their kings as dependent divisions of their army, occupied the valley of the Danube, and from their temporary city, or rather camp, upon its banks, carried their ravages as far as the walls of Constantinople, and transmitted to its court their messages of insolent dictation. When they had exhausted the European provinces of the Eastern Empire, and found that its capital was impregnable, they turned on the West. Attila was politic as well as warlike. He at one time demanded its provinces as the dowry of a self-offered bride, the Roman princess Honoria; at another time, he invited the Visigoth king to share with him in the partition of the Empire. I have already mentioned the invasion of Gaul, the union of the Romans with the Visigoths, the defeat of Attila and his retirement. His power was un-

broken, though fortunately it had received this check. He invaded Italy, and ravaged Venetia and Lombardy from Aquileia to Milan. Shortly after, his death broke up the confederacy of which he was the head, and the Roman world in its poor remnants, and the Teutonic settlers who had occupied so large a portion of it, might breathe in comparative freedom, for the danger of a common extinction no longer hung over them. The power of the Huns disappeared, and his vassal kings divided the Empire of Attila.

In the division of the Empire between the sons of Theodosius, the portion allotted to Honorius had comprised Africa, Spain, Gaul, Britain, Italy, Southern Germany within a line drawn from Mayence to Ratisbon, and the provinces along the right bank of the Danube as far as Belgrade, Noricum, Pannonia, and Dalmatia. Such, with the islands of the Western Mediterranean, was the still magnificent Empire of the West in the year A.D. 395. In the course of eighty years it had ceased to exist, even in name. One by one its provinces had fallen into the hands of its conquerors. The brief tracing of this process is the fourth and remaining topic to which I said I should direct your attention.

The first great province broken off from the Empire was Britain. When the pressure of the

Goths was felt, Stilicho had to draw his forces for the defence of Italy from all parts, Britain not excepted, and the circumstances of the declining Empire did not permit the forces so concentrated to be again equally dispersed. Italy, the heart of the Empire, was peculiarly weak, and this weakness of the centre must be covered at the expense of the frontiers. After long centuries, Hannibal might have seen how deep his sword had driven into the power of Rome, how in defeat he had crippled his enemy. So, too, Sulla, the ferocious enemy of the Samnites, the pride of the Roman aristocracy, might have felt the folly of his iniquitous cruelty; and the Senate might have regretted its blindness in not conciliating the Italian nations. The devastation of Italy, which Hannibal had seen in his dream at Gades, had never been repaired, and the day when its results were fully felt was now come. It had darkened the fortunes of Augustus; it was now the immediate occasion of the destruction of the Empire. Britain, left to itself by the central government, together with its independence, recovered the power of self-defence, and made head successfully against Saxon, Pict, and Scot. The Roman emperor acquiesced in its separation, and the interchange of services bore testimony to that separation having been effected on amicable terms. With the subsequent

fortunes of the island I have here no concern. Spain was the next lost, occupied as it was by the tribes who had followed Radogast—occupied by them, but not permanently, for the Vandals preferred Africa—and the Alans and the Suevians fell before the Visigoth. I must remind you that I am giving you the results in the most general form. Nearly about the same time, at the close, that is, of the reign of Honorius, the province of Gaul saw itself reduced within very narrow limits, for the Visigoth occupied its southern portion, and the Frank and the Burgundian its northern and north-eastern, together with Switzerland, leaving the Roman but a small central division. Thus, in the reign of Honorius, the Western Empire had lost, by cession or by conquest, its fairest and strongest provinces, the three great kingdoms of Britain, Spain, and a large part of Gaul. On the marriage of his successor with Eudoxia, the daughter of Theodosius, it ceded, in return for the honour of that alliance, the Western Illyricum, Noricum, Pannonia, and Dalmatia, retaining thus simply Italy and Africa, with the precarious possession of the border provinces on the Upper Danube. But by this fatal generosity it exposed itself, without any screen, to the attacks of the barbarians from the east; it threw open its most important frontier. The only great province, besides Central Gaul, which re-

mained, was Africa, and this was torn from it early in the reign of Valentinian by the Vandals. The extension of the Visigoth kingdom soon made the supremacy of Rome in Gaul merely nominal, and its barbarian defenders, under Ricimer and Odoacer, completed the work of destruction, and transformed, though still keeping up the semblance of allegiance, Italy from a Roman into a barbarian kingdom.

With these remarks closes my treatment of the four points which I selected, and my direct treatment of the fall of the Western Empire, of its agony of eighty years. I said it was a period of discord and confusion ; yet, compared with that of the three centuries which follow, it is seen to be much less confused. The destruction is simple when put side by side with the ebb and flow of the subsequent barbarian conquests, when the conquerors already within the frontier had to discuss the settlement amongst themselves, and to make head against the fresh swarms of invaders that were always threatening all settlement. For as at the beginning of our period we had still left—at least, outwardly—the unity of the Empire of the West, so throughout its sad history, as the provinces are torn away one by one, we never lose sight of that unity. Limb by limb the body is rent to pieces, but the identity ceases not to afford a central object

for our observation. But the point has now been reached when the identity is no longer visible, and the existence of the Western Empire, of the Roman Empire in its strictest form, has become a matter of history.

Men are we, and must grieve when even the name
Of that which once was great has passed away.

Such, in some degree, is the feeling of the historical student as he watches the final disappearance of that on which he has been so long engaged. But the feeling of regret at the passing of one stage of society can be only transitory in the mind of one who rightly judges historical phenomena. For such an one will read history with the conviction that, throughout its long series, there may be traced a progress, varying in degree of quickness, often retarded by the blindness of man, but never absolutely broken off; and that the stage of society which he momentarily regrets is now peacefully, now in convulsions, passing into a new one, which shall make his regrets superfluous; that the death of the old is the birth of the new. He will, I think, by attentive study, even go further than this—he will see that the old only partially dies, that it leaves some part of itself to be a powerful element in, and modification of, its successor. In this spirit I have endeavoured to set before you the history of the Roman Empire. I may have seemed to some, in

tracing its fortunes, to have over-estimated its advantages. Yet most, surely, will acknowledge, that the idea of which that Empire was the embodiment is not without grandeur; that it was a high conception, that of the incorporation into one organism of so large a portion of the habitable, of the whole of the civilized, world; and that the execution was, in many points, not unworthy of the conception.

The Roman emperors had to contend with some evils for which they were not responsible, but the blame of which must rest, partly on the misfortune, partly on the criminal policy, of their predecessor, the senatorial government. It was inevitable that the long struggle for empire should exhaust the world, but a wiser policy might have limited that exhaustion to the degree in which it was inevitable. The inherent difficulties, too, of welding into one mass such discrepant materials as the various nationalities, will not be underrated by any one who attentively considers them. It is far more probable that he will underrate the degree to which these difficulties were overcome. Neither, again, were the Roman emperors responsible for inheriting, together with such a mass of various nationalities, the more fatal difficulty inherent in the conflicting systems of polytheism, and the tendency to demoralization which such conflict involved. I have

already said that the solution in which they acquiesced appears to me the cardinal weakness of their system. For by that acquiescence, they made themselves responsible for the attempt to check the counter influences which were at work to limit that demoralization, and left themselves no power to replace the moral bonds which had hitherto kept society in a state of life, the spirit of national independence, and a national religion, by a new and firmer bond. They could offer a political, legal, material unity; they could not offer a moral and spiritual one. And in the absence of this, the rest were but palliatives. For this result I cannot but think the imperial system was responsible. And it is not without consolation to reflect that this weak side of their system is the one which really was destroyed. For as we watch its lineaments becoming fainter and fainter till they disappear, and we can speak regretfully of the fall of Rome, we are apt to forget that the great idea of Rome did not perish with the outward frame of its polity, and that, after stating at the full the amount of destruction, Rome has yet bequeathed to mankind a rich, a fourfold inheritance.

It has left the tradition of its Empire, of the unity of Western Europe. This was never lost sight of by the various leaders of the barbarians who rose above the general, and showed themselves

statesmen. It was revived three centuries later by Charlemagne. It changed its form, and in the hands of the great popes became a more spiritual unity, evidencing itself, however, outwardly by many unmistakeable signs, most definitely in the Crusades. This spiritual unity again was broken up; but by the political leaders of those who broke it up, the Protestant populations of the sixteenth century—by Elizabeth of England and Henry of Navarre—there was recognised as the aim of their policy, the unity of Western Europe on the basis of a federal union. It was not less recognised even, in the balance of power, and in the great diplomatic settlements of Europe, the Peace of Westphalia and the Congress of Vienna. It is even now animating Western Europe in the struggle which is gradually drawing closer the bonds between its several states, in their common opposition to the aggressive policy of the Czar.

Rome has left besides this the tradition of its law, the basis of most of the law of Europe, and exercising a very powerful influence even where not the basis. It has left also the tradition of the government of its Cæsars, the type of all true government under the present provisional or transition state of society. Above all must we not forget, what I have lately had often occasion to allude to, that within that decaying body were

nourished the seeds of a new organism, protected by the laws of Rome, guarded by its armies, availing itself of its language, adopted finally by its emperors, and left in full vigour to shield the memory of that imperial civilization, to hand down to later times such of its results as could be saved from the conquest, to adopt into its associations the conquerors, and to impregnate with its spirit their settlement and their administration. Such in brief outline is the relation between the Christian polity, and that of Rome on the one hand, the barbarian on the other; and with the mention of that polity, the connecting link, as I have already said, between the dead and the living, I may fitly close the historical portion of these lectures.

I stated at the opening of them, that I thought history must be treated as a whole, that from the earliest recorded civilization down to the latest, there is no real break in the chain; in fact, that the distinction between ancient and modern history is an untenable distinction. I might appeal in justification to my latest remarks, as well as to the various points of contact between the present and the past, which have occurred from time to time. But not content with this, there are two points, the one of immediate political, the other not less of immediate social, interest, to which I would call, in conclusion, your attention.

The first point is that of the present political relations between Western and Eastern Europe, between the highly civilized populations, of which France and England are the respective representatives, and the lower civilization of Russia. In the last few years great alarm has been felt at the advance of Russia, and borrowing language and reasons from the history of the Roman empire, men have talked of northern barbarism again overrunning civilization, of a torrent of Pan Slavism invading Germany, France, and England; of the horrors of another conquest and another settlement. I believe that a sound historical appreciation would have dissipated much of this illusion, by showing the wide difference in the relations between the two powers now engaged and those existing between the Roman empire and its conquerors. And the dissipating of this illusion would have left men's minds free to judge of actual questions with less of passion than was the case. Fear distorts the proportions of all objects, and the preconceived fear of Russia influenced strongly, I cannot but think, the policy of our statesmen, and evidently influences strongly much of the popular language. Nor is this important only for the past. However the present struggle may end, not that I feel doubtful of its issue, not that I feel doubtful that it will end in our success, if we wisely keep it defensive,

and in the defeat, and just defeat, of any attempt to make it aggressive,—but however it may end, it would be well that, not merely from the experience of the actual struggle and the evidence it affords of the powerlessness of Russia for any attack on our civilization, but that on the more solid grounds of historical conviction, the only safe basis of any correct political reasoning, men should be led to this result, that there is really no danger from Russia. So may the alarm be removed, and with it that which it alone justifies, the maintenance of large standing armies, with the double curse they involve, as an obstacle to all sound progress in the social no less than in the political world, for they guarantee oppression and the oppressor, and they burden the productive powers of industry.

The social question which I would submit is this. Led by certain appearances, and by the real disorganization in industrial matters that exists, men talk of the era of the Cæsars as on the eve of return, and the era of the Cæsars means in such connexion not the good but the bad side of the imperial power, its power of compression, not its power to secure and direct progress. The armies of Europe are alone to have the decision, their chiefs alone to govern. I do not deny a certain degree of truth in this importance attached to the military force merely as a provisional power, ensuring order whilst

the various industrial problems are being worked out. But the simple consideration that these industrial problems could not be broached in ancient Rome, from the non-existence of any large industrial aggregates, might open our eyes to the change which makes any analogy between the armies of the Empire and the armies of modern Europe indefensible, leaving out of the question all the other numerous points of difference. Still, in the panic which has animated statesmen recently in presence of the revolutionary spirit, which they connect with these industrial questions, and in the consciousness of their own utter inability to solve the difficulties, as evidenced on occasion of the recent strikes in England, they talk blindly of remedies, blindly of the evils which are to be remedied. The Vandals and the Huns of the fifth century are conceived to find their modern representatives in the artisans of our great towns, banded by the principles of Socialism to the destruction of society. I believe I am stating fairly their language, and it shelters itself under high historical names. No such shelter can give it any value, not even the name of Macaulay. There may be requisite for a time in the great kingdoms of modern Europe a dictatorial power, such as was essentially that of the Cæsars; but it is requisite for a time only, and solely to ensure the peaceful and due discussion of the organization to

which it must give way, the new organization of society on the basis of industry,—

The nobler modes of life,
The sweeter manners, purer laws.

It must, in short, be a dictatorship, not in the interests of the old society, but in those of the new; a dictatorship of progress, not of mere torpid conservatism, one of our worst enemies; or it must be wrested from those who so administer it, and placed in other hands. Such a power, if placed in the hands of a man competent to wield it, will be found to create no difficulty, for 'whilst he recognises the high responsibility of his functions, he will recognise at the same time their inherently provisional character.

THE END.

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